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Nov. 68

JERUSALEM DELIVERED.

VOL. I.

LONDON
PRINTED BY SPOTTISWOODE AND CO.
NEW-STREET SQUARE

THE 30645
JERUSALEM DELIVERED
OF
TORQUATO TASSO.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

JOHN KINGSTON JAMES, KNT. M.A.

'O Victor, unsurpassed in modern song' (BYRON).

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, ROBERTS, & GREEN.
1865.

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v.1

TO
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE
PRINCESS VICTORIA OF BOURBON
(CAPUA).

I little deemed when first I sought thy name,
To grace the efforts of my idle hours,
That thou my indolent nature couldst inflame
With the desire in this cold clime of ours,
To acclimatise thy native country's flowers ;
Nor had I in Torquato's magic lore,
/ Not in Erminia's love, Armida's bowers
Found inspiration equal thine—of yore
Such drew the enraptured bard from lovely Eleonore.

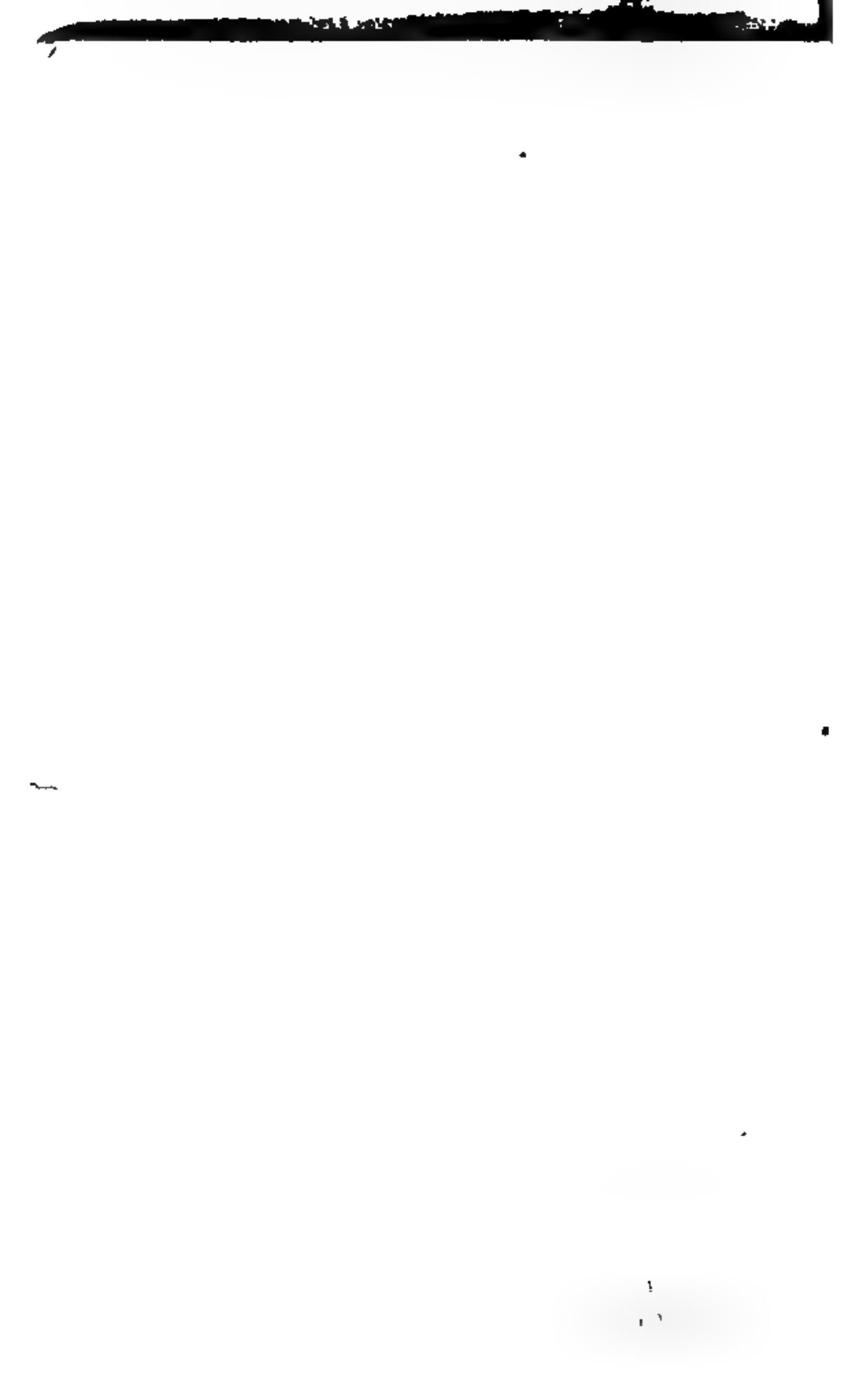
From her proud race thy princely sire is sprung,
Its azure streams meander in thy veins,
And as I echo what the minstrel sung,
I trace in those fair-worded, high-flown strains,
Where he his idol in Sophronia feigns—
The prototype of thee in her he loved ;
Thy peerless beauty now the world enchains,
As Leonora once his being moved,
Thy rival graces have thy kindred lineage proved.

Yet not alone thy beauty and thy birth,
I fain would in this transitory lay
Immortalise as noblest upon earth,
These patent are to all—but only they
Who know thy temperament's unceasing play,
Can realise its all absorbing power,
Or feel the warmth of its unclouded ray :
Aye—tho' around the storms of fortune lower,
Thy rainbow smiles to light can turn the darkest hour.

I then had ventured not my voice to raise,
But left to poets of thy classic land
To shed the lustre of its golden rays
O'er thee, now exiled from its sunny strand.
E'en as I write, my dreams, my thoughts expand,
In hopes thy banishment may soon be o'er ;
There—thou hadst with delighted vision scanned
The Siren's isle, and on its haunted shore
Hadst to their number added one enchantress more.

Then I had not thy glorious countryman
Presented in this barbarous disguise,
To one who in their native splendour can
See to what height his lofty numbers rise :
Still as thy mother's tongue, I deemed thine eyes
Might trace some memories which its sight endear,
Waking sweet thoughts of home—in this surmise
To thee I dedicate my task, nor fear
How the cold world will judge, if it but please thine ear.

PREFACE.





PREFACE.

IT is not my intention to prefix to a work so ample in itself, any detailed particulars of the life of its illustrious author.

Those who would trace the romantic fortunes of the poet from his birthplace amid the orange-groves of Sorrento to his death-bed in the convent of San Onofrio, at Rome, will find abundant matter of interest in the various accounts of his life, particularly in those by his intimate friend Manso, Serassi, Dr. Black, and in the more recent biography by Dr. Milman. Suffice it for my purpose to say that he was born on the 11th of March 1544, and that after a life fraught with many vicissitudes, great change of scene, life at court, love with the Princess Leonora, and imprisonment in the hospital of St. Anne, at Ferrara, he died on the 25th of April 1595, surrounded by the friars of the monastery whither he had gone for

the recovery of his health, and in the church of which now lie his mortal remains.

If the magnitude of the undertaking be in itself sufficient reason for abstaining from any further notice of his life, the same consideration restrains me from making any but the slightest allusion to his immortal work, which, as has been well observed, whether we regard the magnificence of its language, its moral grandeur, the chivalrous self-devotion of its heroes, or the sanctity and sublimity of its subject, may well sustain comparison with either of the two great poems of antiquity, and is, beyond question, *the* epic of modern times. We may search in vain through the pages of Homer or Virgil for any character possessing equal interest with that of its hero, Godfred, whose affections, warm and ennobling as they are, appear to be obliterated by the perpetual sense of a sacred duty superior to them all. He is the personification of the Church militant combating for its Saviour's cause.

The feelings which had been nursed for centuries amid the solitude of the cloister appear in him brought forth into action. If the characters be less natural than those of Homer, they are more exalted, more refined; and if less like what men are, they are perhaps not the less like what they ought to be.

Voltaire says, in his Essay on Epic Poetry: 'The

Jerusalem appears to be in some respects an imitation of the *Iliad*; but, if Rinaldo is drawn after Achilles, and Godfred after Agamemnon, I venture to say that Tasso's copy is much superior to the original. In his battles he has as much fire as Homer, with greater variety; his heroes, like those of the *Iliad*, are distinguished by a difference of character, but those of Tasso are more skilfully introduced, more strongly marked, and infinitely better sustained; for there is scarce one in the *Iliad* that is not inconsistent with itself, and not one in the *Jerusalem* that is not uniform throughout. Tasso has painted what Homer only sketched. Thus, the characteristic of Godfred and Aladine is sagacity, but the modes are finely varied,—in Godfred, it is a calm, circumspective prudence; in Aladine, a cruel policy. Courage is predominant in Tancredi and Arganté, but in the former it is a generous contempt of danger, in the latter a brutal fury. So love, in Armida, is a mixture of levity and desire; in Erminia, it is a soft and amiable tenderness. There is indeed no figure in the picture that does not discover the hand of a master; not even Peter the Hermit, who is finely contrasted with the enchanter Ismeno—two characters which are surely very far superior to the Calchus and Talthybius of Homer.

‘Rinaldo is indeed imitated from Achilles, but his

faults are more excusable ; his character is more amiable : Achilles dazzles us, but we are interested for Rinaldo.

‘The subject of the poem is the most sublime that can be imagined, and the poet has treated it with all the dignity of which it is worthy, and has even rendered it not less interesting than elevated. He strikes out his adventures with spirit, and distributes his light and shade with the judgment of a master. He transports his reader from the tumults of war to the sweet solitudes of love, and from scenes exquisitely voluptuous brings him back to the field of battle. He touches all the springs of passion in a swift but regular succession, and gradually rises above himself as he proceeds from book to book. His style is in all parts equally clear and elegant, and, when his subject requires elevation, it is astonishing how he impresses a new character upon the softness of the Italian language,—how he sublimates it into majesty, and compresses it into strength.’

Metastasio’s opinion of the respective merits of Tasso and Ariosto, as given in a letter to a friend at Naples, is also extremely interesting.

After stating that he was bred an admirer of the latter, he goes on to say : ‘It is not possible for me to describe the strange emotion which the first perusal of the Jerusalem produced in me.

‘The spectacle I beheld, as though represented in a picture, of a great and single action, lucidly proposed, masterly conducted, and perfectly completed—the variety of events that produced and enriched, without multiplying it—the magic of a style always clear, always sublime, always sonorous, able to clothe with its nobility the meanest objects, the life-like colouring with which it compares and describes, the seductive evidence with which it relates and persuades, the truth and uniformity of the characters, the learning, judgment, and, above all, that prodigious force of genius which, in place of exhausting itself as the poem proceeds, acquires fresh strength, have filled me with the delight, hitherto unknown, of respectful admiration, with lively remorse for my long injustice, and with implacable resentment against those that deem the mere comparison of Tasso an outrage to Ariosto.’

I could not refrain from quoting the above, as expressing with such truth, force, and elegance, my own estimation of the merits of the Jerusalem, and of the genius of its author—‘that poet of chivalry, religion, and magic fiction, who inspired the muse of Spenser, and on whose great work the youthful Milton dwelt with such enthusiasm.’ Nor is there any portion of their opinion more thoroughly concordant with my own than their appreciation of the manner in which the poem rises in interest in each successive canto,

until it culminates, in the very last stanza, with the picture of the pious Godfred kneeling at the foot of the Holy Sepulchre, having performed his vow in the Conquest of Jerusalem.

It surely was not in vain that Tasso hoped, 'by labour and intense study, joined with the strong propensity of Nature, to leave something so written to after times that they should not willingly let it die.'

In what concerns myself, I have little to add. I began the task not without a deep sense of its great difficulty ; and have felt, during its progress, that however easy it may comparatively be to turn an ode or a sonnet, it is a very different thing to render with spirit and fidelity a poem extending to nearly fifteen thousand lines : in the former case, one can remember the entire subject-matter, which, remaining, as it were, palpably present in the workshop of the brain, affords the artist the necessary leisure and opportunity for correction ; in the latter, such results can only be attained by careful and reiterated supervision. I was also aware of the great difficulties that great poets had experienced in similar undertakings. What says Denham ?—'It is not the translator's business alone to translate language into language, but poetry into poetry ; and poetry is of so subtle a spirit, that in pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate, and if a new spirit be not added in the

transfusion, it will remain a "caput mortuum," there being certain graces and happinesses peculiar to every language that give life and energy to the words.' Cowper's opinion was 'that a just translation of any ancient poet in rhyme was impossible ;' and Dryden says : 'No man is capable of translating poetry who, besides a genius to that art, is not a master both of his author's language and of his own ; nor must we understand the *language* only of the poet, but his particular turn of thoughts and expression, which are the characters that distinguish, and, as it were, individuate him from all other writers.'

These considerations might have deterred more experienced persons from attempting the task, but my singular admiration for Tasso's sublime work, and hence a natural desire to extend his fame by clothing in my own tongue those exquisite ideas that took life in foreign attire, determined me to proceed.

The same motive prompted me, during the progress of my labours, in order more completely to identify myself with the subject, and catch as it were the colouring of the Poem, to visit the Place.

In the spring of 1863, I had the satisfaction of doing this, and however little I may have succeeded in my object, I am at least able, personally, to bear witness to the accuracy of the poet's descriptions ; in general, they are most precise ; a few

unimportant errors have crept in, which will be found in the notes, as they occur.

In the north-western angle of the walls that completely surround Jerusalem are the remains of a castle now called Goliath's: this is the tower alluded to in Canto III.—XII. as standing between two gates, those of Jaffa and Damascus, to which King Aladine retired, accompanied by Erminia, and from which she pointed out the chief leaders of the crusading host.

On this point, which is the highest in the city, and from which there is a magnificent panoramic view, it has been my delight to remain for hours, Tasso in hand, realising the various incidents and localities mentioned in the immortal poem.

The entire scene, consecrated as it is by poetry that combines with singular felicity the truth of history with the charm of fiction, was in my eyes haunted ground.

I do not consider it any part of my business to criticise the performance of my predecessors. The simple fact of my publishing speaks for itself. In my judgment there is still wanting a translation of the Jerusalem, and this opinion, I believe, is shared by all that are acquainted with the original.

Though fully sensible that all translations are at best a compromise, in which to hit off the force and music of individual expressions, one line must be

sacrificed to the exigencies of another, I still have a profound conviction that it is quite possible to obtain a compensating equivalent. Whether I shall reach that point, time alone can tell ; but I consider anyone unworthy the attempt of reproducing a great original, whose scope is less ambitious. I have chosen that measure which affords the greatest facility for rendering the Italian with the greatest exactness—for, as Lord Macaulay justly observes : ‘ a translator should select that measure in which the exigencies of rhyme are the fewest. Avoiding the monotonous tedium of the couplet, I have adopted the elegiac metre of alternate rhyme, which Dryden considered the noblest in our language ; and though I certainly should have preferred the more finished numbers of the original octave, I found upon trial it must have been at the expense of fidelity.

It may be objected that I have introduced the anapæst too frequently. In most instances I have done so designedly, considering that it renders the verse more sonorous, and breaks the monotony of the ever-recurring iambus.

Fault may be also found in the occasional use I make of ignoble terminations and imperfect rhymes. Of the former, a notable example occurs in the very first verse ; but here not only the construction of the line itself, but the exigencies of the corresponding

one, have constrained me to employ the word 'who,' which would have been justly censured had it occurred in an original composition. A similar instance occurs almost at the end of the poem, Canto xx. 142, where, in order to preserve the dominant verse in its integrity, I have had recourse for its corresponding rhyme to the ignoble word 'for.'

Of imperfect rhymes there occur such examples as 'lone'—'alone,' 'contained'—'retained,' and other similar ones; though these are feeble, they are not such as to offend the ear. In order to be able to say in the very words of Tasso, Canto xvii. 46:

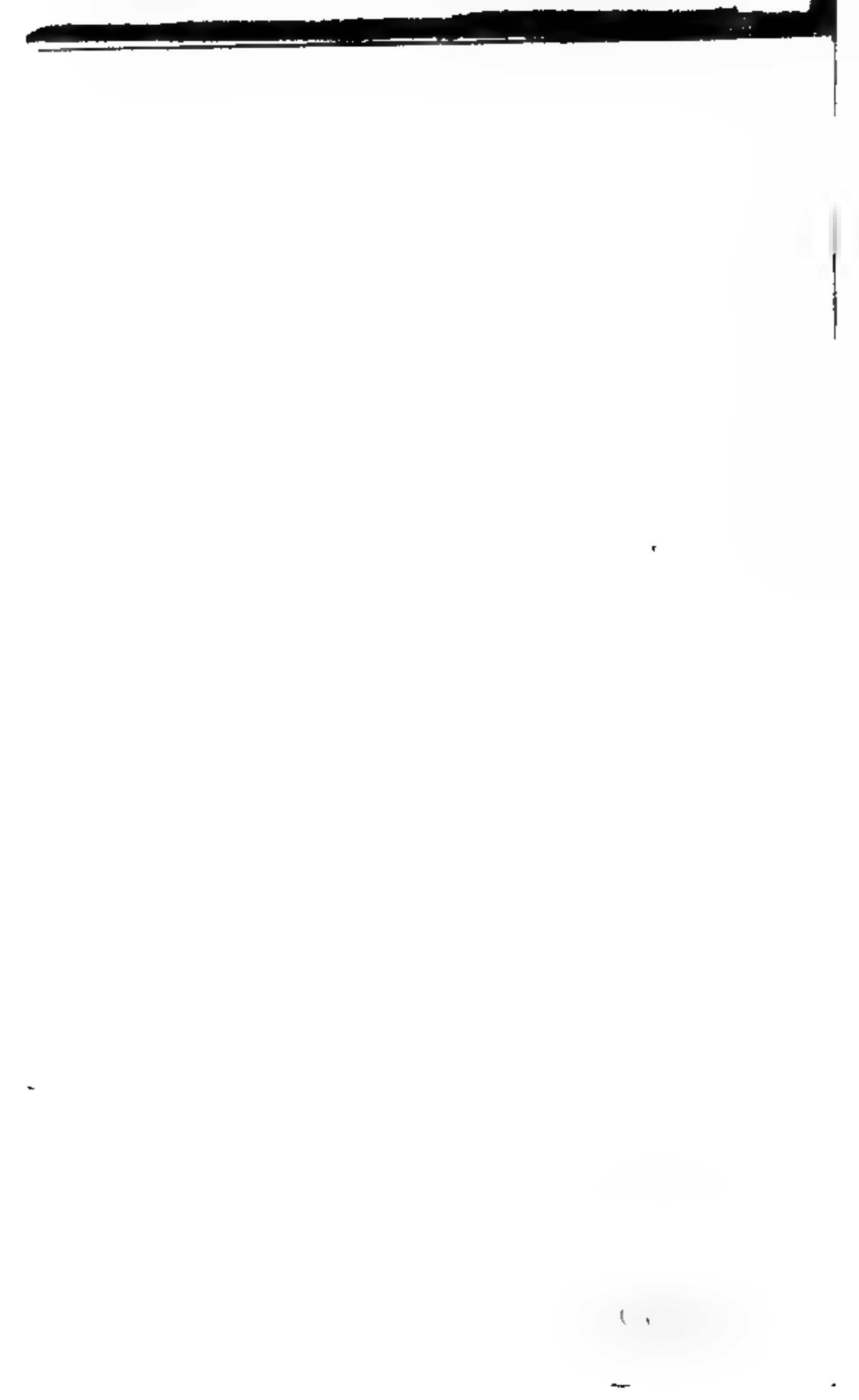
'Enough at present, that I want revenge;'

I have adopted the almost similar word 'avenge' as the corresponding rhyme, deeming that a much less evil than emasculating the dominant verse; in short, wherever the requirements of any particular verse need, in my opinion, a certain mode of expression, even to the retention of the words in the same places that they occupy in the original, I have not hesitated to sacrifice the corresponding one; indeed, I go so far as to say, that if any translation so considerable as the present were free from such blemishes, it would suggest to my mind grave doubts as to its fidelity. I would have translations regarded as a whole, in which, as I have before observed, to preserve the

music and force of particular passages, one line must be sacrificed to the exigencies of another.

In conclusion, I quote Chateaubriand's estimate of the poem. He says : ' Whoever has a relish for the beauty, the art, the interest of a poetic composition, for richness of detail, for truth of character, for generosity of sentiment, should make the "Jerusalem Delivered" his favourite study. It is in an especial manner the poem of the soldier. It breathes valour and glory, and, as I have elsewhere observed, it seems to have been written on a buckler in the midst of camps.'

LONDON: Decr. 1, 1864.





ARGUMENTS

TO

THE FIRST VOLUME.

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CANTO I.

I

THE pious arms I sing, and captain who
The hallowed sepulchre of Jesus freed ;
Much did he both in field and council do,
And much he suffered in the glorious deed ;
And Hell in vain opposed him, and in vain
Afric, allied with Asia, drew the sword :
Since Heaven its favour gave him, and again
His errant comrades to the Cross restored.

II

O Muse! not thou that dost enwreathe thy brow
With fading laurels upon Helicon ;
But high in heaven, 'mid choirs celestial, Thou
That hast of deathless stars a golden crown,
Do thou my breast with heavenly warmth inspire ;
My song illumine, nor thy grace decline,
If I the Truth embellish, or attire
These leaves in other ornaments than thine.

III

Childlike, the world runs ever there, where most
The attractive Muse pours forth her sweetest strains ;
And Truth, enriched by flowing song, thou know'st,
Through its disguise the most reluctant gains ;
Thus the fond mother o'er the vase's lips
Spreads the sweet snare, which her sick child she gives,
Deluded, he the bitter potion sips,
And from his own delusion life receives.

IV

August Alphonso, who from Fortune's shocks
Didst rescue, and bring safely into port
Me—wandering pilgrim—who, 'mid waves and rocks,
Was tossed about, and made their cruel sport :
Receive with favour these my verses, whose
Tribute to thee I dedicate, I vow.
The day may come that my prophetic muse
Dare write of thee what she foreshadows now.

V

And right it were (if aye the Christians make
A league of peace together, and essay,
With ships and banded armies, to retake
From the fierce Thracian his ill-gotten prey)
That unto thee command on shore belong,
Or on the sea, if it possess more charms :
Of Godfred emulous, meanwhile hear my song,
Arm, and prepare to meet the shock of arms.

VI

Six years had nearly passed since in the East,
The Christian host began their great Crusade ;
By storm Nicea they had won, nor ceased
Till Antioch fell by art's strategic aid,
Which they then held against the Persian ; they
Then took Tortosa from Judæa's king ;
To winter's rigour afterwards gave way,
Awaiting anxiously the coming spring.

VII

And now that wintry season was near gone
That gave their arms a truce, and spring was nigh,
When the Eternal Father from his throne—
Placed in the purest regions of the sky,
And raised as far above the starry sphere,
As it from hell's abyss—to look down deigned,
And in an instant, at a glance, from there
Saw what the world within itself contained.

VIII

All things He saw, and, then in Palestine,
Upon the Christian princes fixed His eyes,
And with that look of His which, man's design,
Can to its inmost secrets scrutinise ;
Godfred perceived, who with impatience burns
To drive the Pagans from the Holy Town,
And filled with faith and holy fervour, spurns
All mortal glory, riches, and renown.

IX

But saw in Baldwin one whose every thought
On worldly grandeur and repute was bent ;
In Tancred one who held his life at nought,
So much his heart did hopeless love torment ;
Boemond, in his new realm of Antioch, saw
Found institutions, and with resolute rod
Establish order, while imposing law,
And rites, and worship, of the one true God ;

X

And wrapped up so entirely in that thought,
That he all other enterprise forgets ;
Marked with what warlike soul Rinaldo's fraught,
And how his spirit at inaction frets ;
His blind devotion viewed in honour's cause,
Free from all lust of empire or of gold ;
Saw him intent on Guelpho's sayings pause,
Example learning of the illustrious old.

XI

But when the world's Omniscient King had scanned
The inmost bent of these and other hearts,
Gabriel He summoned from the angelic band,
Who 'mid the first sustained the second parts,
And between God and better spirits was
Interpreter and herald. Down he bears
To earth's low regions Heaven's eternal laws,
And thence brings back to Heaven man's zeal and prayers.

XII

God thus His herald spoke : ' Go, Godfred find
And ask the cause of his delay from me,
Why doth he not renew the war, designed
Enslaved, oppressed Jerusalem to free ?
Let him the chiefs to council call, and shame
To this emprise the slow. Their captain, he,
I him elect, and they shall do the same,
His subjects then, that now companions be.'

XIII

Such God's command. At the immortal sound
Gabriel to execute the task began :
With air he girt his viewless form around,
Yet made it subject to the sense of man ;
Limbs of a man he feigned, and human face,
But left the light of heavenly splendour there ;
Assumed the age when youth takes childhood's place,
And with bright rays adorned his flaxen hair.

XIV

White wings, whose tips were fringed with gold he wore,
Unflagging, swift, and pliable : with these
He cleaves the clouds and winds, and passes o'er,
In flight sublime, the low-lying lands and seas.
Thus clad, the heavenly messenger descending
Down to the world the Father's message brings,
And first o'er Lebanon his course suspending,
There poised himself upon his balanced wings.

XV

Thence shooting downward, his precipitous flight
Directed straightway to Tortosa's shore ;
In the east was rising the sun's new-born light,
A part was out, but 'neath the waters more.
Godfred was offering up his matin prayer,
A daily habit which he never ceased,
When with the sun, but still more bright and fair,
Appeared the radiant angel from the east.

XVI

Who to Prince Godfred said ; ' The moment, lo !
For making war, is opportune for thee ;
Why then the opportunity forego,
From her vile yoke Jerusalem to free ?
Do thou to council the camp's chiefs collect,
And spur the slothful to this glorious end ;
God for their leader doth thyself elect,
And they to thee submissively will bend.

XVII

' In me God sends His herald—I reveal
To thee His mind. Of glorious victory
What hopes should thence inflame thee, and what zeal
For the great hosts entrusted unto thee !'
This said, he ceased ; and vanishing from sight,
Flew back to heaven's serenest, loftiest part.
Prince Godfred paused—the language and the light
His eyes so dazzled, so amazed his heart.

XVIII

But when he had recovered and discerned
Who came, who sent him, and what had been said,
If erst he wished, he now intensely burned
To end the war which he was named to head.
Not that to see himself in heaven preferred
Did with ambition his pure breast inspire,
But his own will was by God's will more stirred,
And warmer waxed, as sparkles in a fire.

XIX

Then his associate heroes and brave friends,
Near him encamped, to council he invites;
Message on message, word on word, he sends,
And with his summons always prayers unites.
All that might valour wake in them that dozed,
Or in the generous greater warmth instil,
He seemed to have found, and with such charm disposed,
That while he pleased the heart he forced the will.

XX

The leaders came, and all the rest complied,
Except Boëmondo, with Prince Godfred's call.
Part camped without, part bivouacked inside
The rampired circuit of Tortosa's walls.
The army's magnates now assembled were—
A glorious council on a solemn day—
When pious Godfred with majestic air
And voice sonorous thus began to say:

XXI

‘ Warriors of God, whom heaven’s great King elects,
Of His true faith the losses to restore ;
You whom He has protected and protects
From storms at sea and hostile arms on shore,
So that within a few brief years our swords
Many rebellious kingdoms overcame,
And ’mong the conquered and subjected hordes
Have spread His victor ensigns and His name ;

XXII

‘ We did not leave our cherished homes and wives,
And tender pledges (if I judge aright),
Nor to the faithless sea expose our lives,
Nor seek the perils of a distant fight,
To gain a vulgar shout of short-lived sound
And hold possession of a barbarous coast.
In this what poor return should we have found,
And to our soul’s perdition, what blood lost !

XXIII

‘ But the great end our inmost wishes spoke
Was to storm Sion’s noble walls, and free
Our fellow Christians from the unworthy yoke
Of hard and such revolting slavery ;
Founding in Palestine a new realm, where
The faithful safely could to Jesus bow,
And whither pious pilgrim might repair
The Tomb to worship, and perform his vow.

XXIV ✓

‘ Thus then till now our deeds in risk are great—
Greater in labour, small in honour’s cause,
But to our purpose nought, if we translate
Our conquering arms to other lands, or pause.
What good to have led from Europe to the war
Such hosts, and ravaged Asiatic ground ?
When the results of our great movement are,
Not kingdoms raised, but ruins scattered round.

XXV ✓

‘ He who would found an empire must not seek
To raise its structure on terrestrial base,
Where few his faith confess or language speak,
’Mid faithless myriads of an alien race ;
Where it is idle from the Greeks to hope,
And Western succour is removed so far,
But he makes ruins that around him ope,
And form beneath their weight his sepulchre.

XXVI ✓

‘ Turks, Persians, Antioch (an illustrious sound,
No less magnificent in fact than name),
Were not our own works, but from God redound,
Nor can we such miraculous victories claim ;
But if we now distort and turn our strength
Against that end the Giver purposed, we
May lose, I fear, His favour, and at length
Become a byword and a mockery.

XXVII ✓

‘Ah, God forbid ! there were a single one
That would so meanly to his grace respond.
No. With beginnings brilliantly begun,
Let the work’s woof and finish correspond ;
Now that the season favours our design,
Now that the passes of the land are free,
What hinders us to reach at Salem’s shrine,
The goal and crowning-point of victory ?

XXVIII

‘Princes, to you I now protest—and my
Protests will ever upon record stand ;
E’en now the saints bear witness upon high—
The time for our great emprise is at hand ;
That may be doubtful which is certain now,
Less opportune for us the more delayed,
And I forebode, if our advance be slow,
That Egypt will the hostile Paynim aid.’

XXIX

He ceased : brief whispering followed on his words,
When the famed hermit Peter rose. He made
One of the council with the mightiest lords,
And was prime author of the great Crusade.
‘I second what has been by Godfred moved,
No room for doubt there is, the truth’s so plain,
By him established, and by you approved :
One word I add his reasoning to sustain.

XXX

‘ When I the wrongs and injuries call to mind,
Which, as if rivals, ye have borne and done,
When cross opinions, and your plans I find
Obstructed in their course, though scarce begun,
To one profound original cause do I
Attribute every quarrel and delay—
To that authority, which, balanced by
Conflicting voice of numbers, has no sway.

XXXI

‘ Where one alone commands not—upon whom
The choice of his subordinates depends,
The worthy’s honour and the culprit’s doom—
Confusion with authority contends.
Of friendly members, then, one body make,
And let one head the others guide and rein,
Let one alone the crown and sceptre take,
Let one the semblance of a king sustain.’

XXXII

Here paused the sage. What thoughts, O sacred Fire,
What soul is proof, blest Spirit, ’gainst thy arts?
Thou didst the hermit with these words inspire,
Thou didst impress them on the warriors’ hearts,
Removing all ingrafted, innate love,
Of independence or ambitious aim;
So Guelph and William are the first to move,
And pious Godfred as their chief proclaim.

XXXIII

The rest approve, and to him delegate
Full powers in council and command to bear.
His, laws on vanquished nations to dictate,
And when and where he pleases war declare :
The rest, his former equals, are to pay
To him obedience as their sovereign head.
Concluded this, Fame, light-winged, flew away,
And through a thousand tongues the tidings spread.

XXXIV

He then confronts the soldiers, and appears
To them well worthy such high rank to bear :
Receiving their salute and warlike cheers
With a majestic yet benignant air.
But when he had acknowledged their display
Of love and loyalty, he straight withdrew,
Commanding the whole camp, the following day
Should, ranged in order, pass in grand review.

XXXV

Beyond his wont translucent and serene,
In the flushed orient rose the morrow's sun,
When 'neath his flag was each Crusader seen
Armed, as the day to dart his beams begun ;
And showed himself as smart as possible
To pious Godfred, wheeling on the grass.
He kept his place, and thus beheld full well
The marshalled horse and foot before him pass.

XXXVI ✓

O Memory! in whose charge inviolate
The guardianship of all things is reposed,
Endow me with thy virtue to relate
What chiefs, what legions, that great camp composed;
Re-echo may the glory of their morn,
Though voiceless now, and black by ages made:
Snatched from thy treasures, may my tongue adorn
That which all time may hear, nor ever fade.

XXXVII D

The French were first to muster in advance,
Erst by Prince Hugo the king's brother led;
All were selected from the Isle of France,
A fine large country by four rivers fed.
When Hugo died, that fierce and battailous band
The golden lilies' cognisance pursued
Under Clothaire's illustrious command,
Who, if else perfect, lacketh royal blood.

XXXVIII ✓

A thousand sheathed in heaviest armour are.
Equal in numbers the next squadron came,
Who with the first were fully on a par,
In look, in nature, discipline and fame:
All Normans, guided to the holy war
By their own Robert, Duke of Normandy.
Then William and the pious Ademar,
Priests of the people, lead their squadrons by.

XXXIX V

And these, for whom nought formerly, but prayer
And holy offices had any charms,
Beneath the helmet press their flowing hair,
And practise now the cruel use of arms.
From Orange and its confines on the Rhone,
Four hundred cavalry the former brought ;
The latter led the men of Puy, who shone
In equal numbers, nor less bravely fought.

XL V

Prince Baldwin next advances, leading on,
With his own Boulognese, his brother's band,
Since pious Godfred ceded him his own
When chosen captain, captains to command.
To him the gallant Earl of Chartres succeeds,
A valiant knight and prudent counsellor ;
He brings four hundred horse—and Baldwin leads
Three times that number mounted to the war.

XLI V

Prince Guelpho occupies the adjoining space,
Whose high estate is equalled by his worth ;
Who from his father's Latin stock can trace
Through Este's house his own Italian birth ;
But German by descent in the female line,
He's now a Guelph, and ruleth in the west,
Carinthia, and 'twixt Danube and the Rhine
Those realms the Sueves and Rhetians once possessed.

XLII ^L

To that which was his mother's heritage,
He joined by conquest great and glorious lands,
And hence brings those who in their generous rage
Would face e'en Death itself, when he commands :
Who in warm dwellings cheat the frost and snow,
And winter pass in feasts and jovial cheer.
Five thousand erst, but scarce a third part now
(Sole remnant of the Persian war) is here.

XLIII ✓

Next follows on that flaxen, fair-haired race
Who dwell 'twixt France, Germania and the main,
Which Rhine and Meuse both inundate—a place
Fruitful in cattle and all kinds of grain.
And the islanders, who 'gainst the ocean's rise
Make high embankments to restrain its ire ;
Which, not content with ships and merchandise,
Swallows whole towns, and provinces entire.

XLIV ✓

Each is a thousand strong ; in one command
Another Robert leads them proudly on.
Somewhat more numerous is the British band,
Led by Prince William, the king's younger son.
The English bowmen are ; with them come friends
Who dwell still nearer the north pole : all these
From her dense woods remote Hibernia sends,
That distant Thule of the northern seas.

XLV

Next comes Tancredi—nor 'mid all is there,
Except Rinaldo, a more puissant knight,
Of princelier bearing, or in look more fair,
More high-souled, or more dauntless in the fight,
And if a shade of error cloud his worth,
The fault is Love's, who waken'd wild desires.
Love at first sight, that took 'mid arms its birth.
And upon memory feeding strength acquires.

XLVI

The story goes, that on that glorious day
The Franks had routed Persia in the fight,
Victorious Tancred, wearied from the fray,
At length desisted to pursue their flight,
Seeking for his parched lips and drooping flanks
Refreshment and repose ; by chance then strayed
To where a fountain gemm'd with emerald banks,
Woo'd him to rest beneath the summer shade.

XLVII

When suddenly before him he beheld
All arm'd except the head, a beauteous maid :
Pagan she was, and by like cause impelled,
Had come herself to rest beneath the shade.
He saw, and burn'd : her lovely countenance
Bewitched him so that he fell deep in love.
Wondrous ! that love scarce born should thus entrance
The heart of man, and so all powerful prove.

XLVIII

She donned her casque, and but that others came,
Would have assailed her adversary; she
Then left her prize: nor was the haughty dame
A fugitive but from necessity.
But in his heart her flushed and beautiful face
A life-like image of itself enwove,
And present ever was the act—the place,
Imperishable fuel to his love.

XLIX

And easy 'tis in his sad face to read,
'This man's in love and feeds a hopeless flame,'
As sighing deeply without taking heed,
Dejected, downcast, Prince Tancredi came.
Eight hundred cavalry escorted him,
And with him left Campania's sunny plain,
(That pride of nature!) and the hills that limn
Their teeming bosoms in the blue Tyrrhene.

L

Behind them Greece two hundred men supplied,
In no defensive iron armour bound;
Each has a short sword pendent on one side,
And bows and quivers on their backs resound.
Hardened from work, their horses are like wire,
Proof 'gainst fatigue, in diet spare and slight;
As ready to attack as to retire,
They in loose order spread, and flying, fight.

LI ✓

Tatin commands the troop—the only Greek
That Latin arms accompanied was he.
Shame, shame, O Greece! burns not thy conscious cheek?
Was not the battle near enough to thee?
And yet a calm spectator thou couldst be,
And wait those mighty deeds' result so long!
If thou'rt so vile a slave, thy slavery
Is justice (nay, complain not) and no wrong.

LII ✓

Lo last in order, but the first in fame,
In valour, skill, and honourable scars,
The hero squadron of Adventurers came,
Terror of Asia, thunderbolts of Mars.
Argo, no more thy Minyans vaunt; nor boast,
Arthur, of thy knight-errants of romance:
Your old achievements in their deeds are lost,—
But worthy who to lead such combatants?

LIII ✓

Dudon of Consa is their chief; for since
'Twas hard to judge their rank and worth between,
The others had submitted to that prince,
Who had much more achieved and more things seen;
Sedate, and past his manhood's prime, he shows,
Tho' grey, that in him still fresh sap abounds,
And scars imprinted on his brow disclose
The noble marks of no ignoble wounds.

LIV ✓

Eustace is 'mong the foremost : his own worth
Makes him renowned, his brother Godfred more.
Gernando, too, Norwegian prince by birth,
Who vaunts his titles, coronets, and power.
Undying Fame gives Balnavilla place,
And Engerlan, amid the noblest there ;
And 'mong the bravest that the squadron grace,
Gentonio, Rambald, and two Gerards are.

✓
LV

Ubaldo and Rosmondo are much praised,
Of Lancaster's proud duchy the proud heir ;
Nor shall Obizzo's gallant name be razed
By envious time, that would no memories spare ;
Nor the three Lombard brothers be concealed,
Achilles, Sforza, and bold Palamed ;
Nor Otho, who by conquest gained the shield,
Where the child issues from the dragon's head.

LVI

Nor can I Guasco nor Rodolph pass by,
Nor one or other Guido—famous both ;
And Guernier and Everard ungratefully
To leave in nameless silence I am loth.
Edward, Gildippe, whither force you me,
Tired with this record, O uxorious pair ?
In death you shall not disunited be,
That were united even in the war.

LVII ✓

What learn we not among the schools of Love?
There she was taught to be a soldier, whom
Nothing from her dear husband can remove,
And both their lives hang on one single doom;
Blow never falls that injures only one,
Or can the other from its pain exclude:
She prostrate falls when he is stricken down,
And he pours forth his soul if she her blood.

LVIII

But beyond all that formed that brilliant show
Is young Rinaldo—none with him can vie;
He raises sweetly fierce his regal brow,
And fixed on him alone is every eye.
He outstrips age and hope, and scarce appear
The flowers, than they to fruit mature give place;
Armed cap-à-pie, to see him charge, you'd swear
'Twas fiery Mars; Cupid to see his face.

LIX ✓

Him to Bertholdo fair Sophia bore,
Upon the Adige's banks, their native nest—
Sophia to Bertholdo; but before
He as a child was taken from the breast,
Matilda took him, brought him up, and taught
In every princely art, and there he stayed,
Till the trump, pealing in the orient, caught
His ear and led him to the great Crusade.

LXIII ✓

Alcasto comes the third. Such lowering face
Of yore had Capaneus when threatening Thebes.
Six thousand Swiss—a bold and hardy race—
From the Alps he brings. The steel which once broke glebes
Or turned the fallow furrow with its share,
They to new shapes had turned for nobler things ;
And the rude hand that erst of flocks took care,
Now hurls defiance fearlessly at kings.

LXIV ✓

Beneath the lofty standard's outstretched wings,
That bears St. Peter's diadem and keys,
With him seven thousand foot Camillus brings,
Glistening in armour, from across the seas.
O'erjoyed, Heaven chose him for an emprise, where
He might renew his ancestors' renown,
And prove that if his Latin soldiers were
Wanting in aught, 'twas discipline alone.

LXV ✓

Now all the squadrons had marched past him, all
In order of review, this being the last,
When Godfred sent the leading chiefs to call,
And to them said, as round him they were massed :
' My orders are, the host move swiftly down,
Soon as to-morrow's dawn regilds the east,
So as to reach the consecrated town
Early as possible, when looked for least.

LXVI ✓

‘ Prepare then for the march, and for the fight ;
Nay more, my friends, prepare for victory.’
Language so bold, from such a cautious knight,
Inspired each soldier with fresh energy :
All are prepared to march when dawn appears,
Nor from impatience can get any rest ;
But provident Bouillon is not without fears,
Though close he locked them in his silent breast ;

LXVII ✓

Since he had from reliable report,
Heard Egypt’s king was posted in the line
Of Gaza’s walls—a fine commanding fort,
Built to o’erawe the power of Palestine—
And scarce could deem that one, accustomed so
To deeds of bloodshed, would remain at rest.
Thinking in him to find a bitter foe,
His faithful herald, Henry, he addressed :

LXVIII ✓

‘ With all despatch, I want thee to repair,
In a light pinnace, to the coast of Greece,
Where should arrive (thus writes me one who ne’er
Errs in his judgment, or gives false advice),
A royal youth of most undaunted soul,
Who seeks to join us in our great emprise ;
Prince of the Danes, from regions near the pole,
He leads a numerous band as our allies.

LXIX

✓
' But, since the false Greek emperor may chance
On him to practise his accustomed arts,
To urge him back, or turn his bold advance,
Unto, from us remote, outlandish parts ;
Do thou, my herald and adviser true,
Dispose him in my name, to that which may
Profit us both. Tell him to hasten too,
Since quite unworthy were the least delay.

LXX

✓
' Return thou not with him, but there remain
With the Greek monarch, to procure his aid,
Which he has promised o'er and o'er again,
And which is due by force of treaties made.'
Thus spoke and charged his envoy, who, at eve,
Soon as he had his lord's credentials ta'en,
At once took, hurrying his departure, leave.
In slumber then Prince Godfred soothed his brain.

LXXI

The following morn, as soon as opened were
The lucid orient's portals to the sun,
The crash of drums and trumpets shook the air,
And to the march urged every soldier on.
Less welcome far the sound, in summer's heat,
Of rumbling thunder, big with hopes of rain,
Than was, to those stout-hearted legions, sweet
The haughty summons of that warlike strain.

LXXII

Straightway inflamed with strong religious zeal,
Each with his wonted arms his limbs protects ;
Straightway appear bright groups of flashing steel,
As each Crusader 'neath his chief collects.
The marshalled hosts then joined, in gallant show
Their every banner to the breeze unloose,
And in the grand imperial standard, lo !
To Heaven streams proudly the triumphant Cross.

LXXIII ✓

Meanwhile the sun, that in celestial fields
Rolls ever onwards, and ascends on high,
Their armour strikes, and from helms, swords, and shields,
Draws such fierce lightning that it blinds the eye.
With sparks the atmosphere appears to blaze
In one vast conflagration, and the sound
Of clanking iron blends with rampant neighs,
Whose deafening clangour stuns the country round.

LXXIV ✓

The captain, to protect from ambushade
His gallant legions, had detached a band
Of numerous horsemen, lightly armed, and bade
Them scour the circuit of the neighbouring land ;
And in advance skilled pioneers had sent,
The roads from all impediments to free,
To fill the hollows, level each ascent,
And that all passes closed might opened be.

LXXV ✓

There is no Pagan host together bound,
No sweeping flood, dense wood, or mountain crest,
No wall encircled by a moat profound,
That can the Christians' onward march arrest.
Thus doth at times the mighty king of streams
O'erleap his banks with irresistible force,
As beyond measure swoln he proudly teems,
Nor is there aught that dare oppose his course.

LXXVI ✓

Alone the king of Tripoli, perchance,
With arms, men, treasure, under bolt and bar,
Might have delayed the Christian host's advance,
But dared not venture upon open war.
Nay, entertained them freely on his lands,
And both by gifts and embassies appeased,
Accepting terms of peace at Godfred's hands,
Such as to impose the pious captain pleased.

LXXVII

Here from Mount Seir, which to the orient rears (1)
Its lofty head, and dominates the town,
Crowds of the faithful, from the tenderest years
Up to extreme old age, came flocking down,
Rejoiced to see the Christian conqueror,
Whom they conversed with, and with stores supplied,
Nor failed to admire the arms the strangers wore.
From them Prince Godfred had a friendly guide.

LXXVIII

Ever in hearing of the billows' roar,
By paths direct he led the banded host,
Well knowing that along the adjacent shore,
To give assistance friendly vessels coast,
Which could the camp provided fully keep
With necessary stores, and cause that wheat
Each isle in Greece for him alone did reap,
Their vintage stony Scio and fair Crete.

LXXIX ✓

Beneath the weight of ships and lighter pines
The waters groan, so that no longer free
Passage is open for the Saracens,
Throughout the wide Mediterranean sea.
Besides the vessels of Saints George and Mark,
Armed by Venetians and the Genoese,
England and France sent many a gallant bark,
And Holland, and the fertile Sicilies.

LXXX ✓

And these, which were in closest union bound
Together by one will, from various lands
Came freighted deeply, and most amply found,
With all things needful for terrestrial bands ;
Who, finding to dispute their path no foe,
And all the passes on the frontiers free,
With beating hearts and speed redoubled, go
To where Christ suffered mortal agony.

LXXXI

But Fame precedes them, bearing in her flight
A host of true and lying rumours : how
Hotly the conquering Paladins unite—
Have marched—nor is there can oppose them now—
What and how strong the squadrons are, portrays
The bravest names, their valour and renown—
Relates their vaunts, and with terrific gaze
The usurpers threatens of the holy town.

LXXXII

Anticipation of impending ill
Is worse perhaps than the ill itself to bear,
As in suspense its victims hang, and still
Catch at each doubtful blast, each breath of air.
Outside and in the dolorous city ran
Confused reports and whispers ; on his part
The king, with peril thus impending, 'gan
To brood dark schemes in his misgiving heart.

LXXXIII

This aged prince, called Aladine, now spent
In his new realm a life of constant fears ;
Most cruel once, but his ferocious bent
Was somewhat softened by increasing years.
He having heard the Christians had designed
To storm the ramparts that his town inclose,
New doubts, mistrustful, with old fears combined,
Fearing his subjects no less than his foes.

LXXXIV ✓

Since in one city mixed together, lived
Two races of a faith most opposite,
The weak and lesser part in Christ believed,
The greater and the strong in Mahomet ;
But when the king first gained the holy town
And there resolved to fix his royal seat,
The public dues he lessened for his own,
And on the wretched Franks heaped all the weight.

LXXXV ✓

This thought inflaming his ferocity,
Now cold and torpid from old age, renewed
And aggravated it to such degree
That more than ever he's athirst for blood.
Ferocious thus in summer's heat becomes
That which in winter seemed a harmless snake ;
Thus a tamed lion his wild rage resumes
If any dare his inborn fury wake.

LXXXVI ✓

'I see among these followers of the Cross,'
He cried, 'true signs of new-born joy, and while
We mourn, they glory in the general loss ;
Sole 'mid our common grief they seem to smile.
It may be, hatching snares and treacheries,
Each how to kill me in his mind debates ;
Or how to Godfred and his Frank allies
Unbar with secrecy the city's gates.

LXXXVII ✓

‘ But they shall not : their plans I will forestall,
And to my long pent rancour give full sway.
I’ll make one common slaughter of them all,
Babes at their mother’s breast this hand shall slay ;
I’ll burn their dwellings, nor their temples spare :
These for the dead shall be fit pyre, and ye,
Priests, ’mid the vows in that your sepulchre,
Shall the first victims of my vengeance be.’

LXXXVIII ✓

Thus in his heart the villain planned, nor dared
To thought so ill-imagined give effect ;
And if at length the innocent he spared,
His purpose cowardice, not pity, checked :
Since if one terror makes him pitiless,
A stronger still restrains him and alarms :
He dreads to cut off every chance of peace,
Or rouse too much his foe’s victorious arms.

LXXXIX

His gall, therefore, the enfeloned craven reins,
And seeks elsewhere to vent his rabid ire :
The rustics’ huts he levels, and the plains,
And waving cornfields gives a prey to fire.
No part he leaves entire, uninjured, where
Shelter or food the Frank may find ; nor saves
A single fount, nor doth a river spare,
But with foul poison taints the spotless waves.

XC

Though cruel, cautious, he with providence
Forgets not Salem's safety to ensure :
On three sides perfect was the town's defence.
Northwards alone 'twas somewhat less secure.
But, from his first misgivings, to repair
Its weaker side the king had given commands,
And with all speed large hosts assembled there
Of subject troops and mercenary bands.



CANTO II.

I

WHILE the fell tyrant thus prepared for arms,
To him Ismeno came alone one day ;
Ismene, who from the grave can raise by charms
The dead, and animate inanimate clay ;
Ismene, who by mere sound of muttered spell,
Makes Pluto tremble in his dark domains,
And as his slaves employs the imps of hell
In his foul work, and chains them and unchains.

II

A Christian once, he now to Máhomet bows,
But cannot from his former rites refrain—
Nay, oft both laws, of which he little knows,
Confounds in uses impious and profane ;
And now from caves where he was wont to frame
Far from man's eye his unknown arts, in the hour
Of public risk to Aladine he came,
To wicked king more wicked counsellor.

III

‘ My liege, the dreaded victor army comes,
Without a check it comes,’ the wizard said ;
‘ Do we our duty as the brave becomes,
And Heaven and earth will give the valiant aid.
Thou dost the parts of king and captain fill
Most nobly, all things see to and foresee :
As well their duties did the rest fulfil,
A tomb this country for thy foes would be.

IV

‘ I, for my part, have hither come to share
With thee whatever danger may befall,
And all that can experience, and whate’er
My magic art can do, I promise all.
The angels fallen from heaven I will compel
In our exertions to participate ;
But from what point I will begin the spell,
And in what manner, I will first relate.

V

‘ Hid in the temple of the Christians lies
A subterranean shrine, where is adored
She whom that herd of bigots idolise
As mother of their born and buried Lord.
A quenchless lamp before her image shines,
Which a veil shroudeth from the public eye,
And round it hang in long extended lines
The votive offerings of credulity.

VI

‘ Now this their image, seized from thence, I will
Thou carriest off, my liege, with thine own arm,
And in thy temple place it : my weird skill
Shall then employ so magical a charm,
That while it there is guarded, it shall be
For Salem’s gates a fatal guard and sure.
In walls impregnable thy monarchy
Shall through new mystic influence be secure.’

VII

He thus persuaded him. Impatiently
Flew to God’s sacred temple Aladine,
Forced back the priests, and most irreverently
Seized the chaste image from its sacred shrine,
And bore it off to that accursed fane,
Where with foul rites they oft incensed the Lord.
On the blest image in that place profane
The wizard then calumnious curses poured.

VIII

But when in heaven appeared the morrow’s light,
The guard in charge of the polluted fane,
Not seeing the image where ’twas placed last night,
And searching for it on all sides in vain,
Informed the king, who at the tidings grew
Like one of reason suddenly bereft,
And justly deemed it was some Christian, who
Committed had and then concealed the theft.

IX

Whether it were the work of Christian guile,
Or Heaven did with its influence intervene,
Indignant that receptacle so vile
Should harbour her, its Goddess and its Queen,
Is doubtful still, and it were hard to say
If the deed should to man or God be given ;
But it is piety—man giving way—
To ascribe its dubious authorship to Heaven.

X

The king then made them search on every side,
Each church, each private dwelling, and awards
Torture to those that did the image hide,
And for the informer liberal rewards ;
And the magician left unturned no stone
The truth to fathom, but could not succeed ;
Since, were the act of mortal or its own,
Heaven, spite of all his spells, concealed the deed.

XI

But when the cruel king perceived that they
Hid what he deemed the Christians' crime, he turned
On them his hate, cast all respect away,
And with intense immoderate anger burned.
'Revenge myself,' the tyrant cried, 'will I,
And wreak my fury, let what will befall ;
Provided that the unknown robber die,
In one wide ruin let them perish all.

XII ✓

‘To find the guilty let the guiltless die,
The just and innocent. But whom call just?
They are guilty all, nor is there one that I
Of the whole brood could ever love or trust.
And even if any of this crime be clear,
Let these new pains for old offences pay.
Up, up, my faithful, up! Why linger here?
Up, up—with fire and sword consume and slay,’

XIII

Thus to the crowd did he his venom vent,
And swift the tidings ’mong the Faithful flew,
Who were bewildered at the imminent
Terror of death presented to their view.
None tried defence or flight—none sought for grace
Or proffered supplication. But released
In a strange manner was that timid race,
And safety found, where it could hope for least.

XIV

In maiden prime there dwelt a maiden there
High-souled and passing beautiful; but she
Seemed for her peerless beauty not to care,
Or only as adorning modesty.
And to her greater merit she withdrew,
And hid her merits beneath humble roof;
Away from glances of gallants she flew,
And from their honeyed words remained aloof.

XV

But beauty cannot wholly be concealed,
Beauty which but to see is to admire.
Nor e'en had Love consented, who revealed
Her charms and did a youthful bosom fire.
Cupid! who blind at times now Argus art,
Dost ope and turn, and now blindfold'st the eyes,
Through thee to maiden's bower, most vestal part,
Past thousand guards the glance of lover flies.

XVI

Sophronia she, Olinde he : they were
Both of one town, in common creed both taught ;
He was as modest as the maid was fair,
Much wished, hoped little, and demanded nought,
Nor dared, or knew not how his love to tell ;
She spurned or saw him not, or nought perceived.
This hitherto is what the youth befell ;
Unseen, unknown, or was but ill received.

XVII

Meantime was spread abroad the dire decree
That doomed the Christians to a dreadful death ;
When, no less generous than modest, she
Resolved to save the sharers of her faith.
Virtue this great thought awakened, but was stayed
By virginal propriety and shame,
But virtue won, nay, joined with it and made
Itself ashamed, while daring shame became.

XVIII

Through the dense crowds the maid walked forth alone,
Nor did her loveliness expose nor hide :
Wrapt in a veil she went, with eyes cast down,
Distant her manner was and dignified.
'Twere hard to say if study or neglect,
If art or chance her lovely face composed ;
Her seeming negligence appeared effect
By nature, love, and friendly Heaven disposed.

XIX

Gazed at by all, on passes without heed
The high-souled dame, and the king's presence gains,
Nor though his looks breathe fury, would recede,
But without flinching his fierce look sustains.
'I come,' she said ' (but first, O mighty king,
Restrain thy minions and thy wrath assuage),
I come to name, and in thy presence bring
Secured, the culprit who has roused thy rage.'

XX

Her modest boldness, and the light that flashed
From her majestic, saint-like loveliness,
Almost o'ercame the tyrant, who abashed,
Smoothed his fierce brow, and did his wrath repress.
Then, had he been less stern, or she possessed
Aspect less stern, his heart had been subdued ;
But haughty beauty wins not haughty breast,
Endearments are Love's appetising food.

XXI

Desire it was, amazement, and delight,
If 'twere not love, that moved his villain breast.
'Tell all,' he said, 'my kingly word I plight
That none of mine the Christians shall molest.'
And she, 'The guilty one before you stands:
I took the image. I am she you seek.
The robbery was committed by these hands ;
On me your bloody retribution wreak.'

XXII

Thus her proud head she gave, in prime of youth,
A ransom for the common fate to be.
O noble glorious Falsehood ! Where is Truth
So lovely as to be preferred to thee ?
Doubting awhile the cruel king remained,
And longer than his wont from anger freed,
At length resumed, 'I wish to have explained
Who counselled, and who shared with thee the deed.'

XXIII ✓

And she, 'I would not let another, sire,
Partake my glory in the least degree ;
Alone did I with my own self conspire,
Alone I planned and acted.' 'Then on thee
Alone,' replied infuriate Aladine,
'My vengeful wrath shall fall.' 'I am content,'
She calmly said, 'since all the honour is mine,
That I alone should bear the punishment.'

XXIV ✓

The tyrant now began with freshened ire,
‘ Say where thou didst the accursed image hide.’
‘ ’Tis not concealed ; I cast it in the fire,
And deemed the act most laudable,’ she cried,
‘ As thus at least no unbeliever’s hand
Could more profane our Goddess’ sanctity ;
If thou the theft—if thou the thief demand,
That thou shalt never—this behold in me ;

XXV ✓

‘ Albeit not mine a theft, nor robber I,
To get back what was wrongfully obtained.’
The king, still more incensed at her reply,
Muttered deep threats, nor more his rage restrained.
Vain are your hopes for grace or pardon now,
Immaculate heart, fair face, exalted mind !
And vainly, Love, against his rancour, thou
An ægis of her beauty hadst designed.

XXVI

Seized is the lovely maid : the cruel king
Condemns to death by fire those peerless charms.
Away her mantle and chaste veil they fling,
And pinion with rough cords her delicate arms.
Silent she was, and if her stout heart grew
Ruffled somewhat, no trace of fear was there.
Her beautiful face now faded to a hue
Which was not pale, but only passing fair.

XXVII

Quick spread the news, and among others drew
Olindo there, and soon a crowd collects ;
He the broad fact but not the person knew,
Yet half that it is the beloved suspects.
But when in the act he saw the pinioned fair
Of one not guilty alone, but doomed to die,
And their vile work the officers prepare,
Through the dense crowd he burst, and with a cry,

XXVIII

Screamed to the king, ' Not she ! not she ! you err ;
She's guiltless and from vanity vaunts the feat.
How could a lone unpractised girl like her,
Plan, dare, or execute a deed so great ?
How were deceived the guards, and from the shrine
How was the image of our saint removed ?
Let her say how. The theft, O king, was mine.'
Thus deep, alas ! the unloved lover loved !

XXIX ✓

Adding, ' The image from your mosque I stole,
Where it receives the air and light of day ;
By night I clomb, and through a little hole
That seemed almost impassable, pushed my way.
As mine the glory was, be mine the pains ;
Shall she usurp my martyrdom ? this fire
For me ascends to heaven : mine are these chains ;
For me alone's prepared the funeral pyre.'

XXX

Sophronia raised her head, and on him bent
Her eyes, where glistened a compassionate tear.
'What art thou come for, wretched innocent?
What rash resolve, what frenzy guides thee here?
Can I not bear without thy aid the breath
Of man's vain anger, and despise his power?
I have a heart, too, that makes light of death,
Nor need companion in this fatal hour.'

XXXI

Thus she appealed, but could not cause that he
His words retracted or would change his thought.
Oh noble sight! in such dispute to see
Exalted virtue and affection brought!
Where for the victor the reward is death,
And life is what the vanquished has to fear!
This more provokes the king: as with one breath
To accuse themselves they fondly persevere.

XXXII

It seemed that thus his orders they contemn,
And that in scorn of him they scorn the pain.
'Believed be both,' he cried, 'let both of them
Win; and their fitting recompense obtain.'
Then gave the sign; the sergeants were not slack
Around the youth the fatal chain to place.
Both were now bound to the same stake, and back
To back was turned, and face concealed from face.

XXXIII

Round them the pyre stood ready piled, and nursed
Already had the bellows' breath the flames,
When into piteous plaints Olindo burst,
And to his pinioned partner thus exclaims :
' Are these the bonds, then, that I fondly thought
Would us in life-long company unite ?
Are these the flames then that, my own heart caught,
I hoped in thine would equal fervour light ?

XXXIV

' Far other flames Love promised : other knots
Than those thwart Destiny preparèd hath.
Too, ah ! too long, it has disjoined our lots,
But now unites them close enough in death.
Still, 'tis some comfort if by anguish torn
Perish thou must, to share thy pyre, if I
Cannot thy bed : thy fate alone I mourn,
But not mine own, since at thy side I die.

XXXV ✓

' And oh ! my lot how altogether blest,
How passing sweet my martyrdom would be,
Could I obtain, united breast to breast,
Within thy lips to breathe my soul away ;
And that, expiring the same time with me,
Thou pour'dst in mine, dear girl, thy parting sighs !'
Thus through his scalding tears he spoke, and she
Him gently chid, and counselled in this wise :

XXXVI

‘Far other thoughts, and of a loftier kind,
Far other complaints, dear friend, this dread hour needs ;
Why think not of thy sins, and call to mind
The crown God promises for virtuous deeds ?
In His name borne, sweet will thy sufferings be,
With joy for His supernal seat prepare ;
Behold the heavens, how beautiful, and see
The sun that cheers us and invites us there.’

XXXVII

At this the Pagans wept aloud ; their dole
The Faithful much more silently expressed,
And even something like compassion stole
(Unusual feeling) through the king’s hard breast ;
He felt it coming, and was vexed, nor would
Yield—turned his eyes away, and left the spot.
No tears, Sophronia, thy fair cheeks bedewed :
Wept by them all, alone thou weepest not.

XXXVIII

While in such risk they were, a warrior came
(At least he seemed such) of most princely mien,
Whose foreign arms and strange attire proclaim
That in some distant land he had journeying been ;
His helmet for its crest a tigress bore,
A badge that drew unto itself all eyes,
The badge Clorinda aye in battle wore,
Whence that ’tis she they rightly all surmise.

XXXIX

From childhood she, and now in maiden bloom,
All occupations of her sex disdained ;
To needle, distaff, or Arachne's loom,
To incline her haughty hand she never deigned ;
Soft garments, too, and indoor life did spurn,
For virtue still may dwell in camps. She armed
With pride her countenance ; to make it stern
Delighted her, and even stern, she charmed.

XL

While yet a girl, she with her baby hand
Now urged, now checked the ardour of her horse,
Handled with skill both spear and flashing brand,
And nerved her limbs by wrestling and the course ;
Then o'er the hills and woodlands wild pursued
The bear's and lion's track ; then in the van
Of war appeared, where she, as in the wood,
To man a tigress seemed, to beasts a man.

XLI

From Persia now she came, with all her power
The Christians to resist, though often she
Had strown their mangled limbs upon the shore,
And with their blood encarnadined the sea.
Now on arriving from that distant clime,
The apparatus seen for death decreed,
Wishing to examine and to know what crime
The guilty doomed, she presses on her steed.

XLII

The crowd falls back, while she her palfrey reins,
The fettered victims to examine close.
She sees her silent, and that he complains,
And that the weaker sex most courage shows.
She sees him weep, like one compassion tries—
Not sorrow—or if sorrow, not his own ;
While silent she to heaven so fixed her eyes,
That there her spirit seemed already flown.

XLIII

Clorinda, touched, their hapless fate condoles,
Nor can refrain from weeping, but appears
To feel for her more, who her grief controls ;
Her silence more affects her than his tears.
Nor waited longer, but turned swiftly round
To an old grey-haired man. ‘Tell me,’ she said,
‘Who is this pair, and why together bound ?
Is’t fate or crime that has them hither led ?’

XLIV ✓

Thus questioned, and to her demand received
An answer brief that told the whole event.
Amazed she heard it, and at once believed
That each of them alike was innocent ;
And having purposed to avert their fate,
Far as her arms could force or prayers persuade,
Rushed forward, and with haste precipitate
Removed the flames, and to the attendants said :

XLV ✓

‘ Let none of you that Aladine obey
Dare further in this hateful service stir
Until I speak with him ; for this delay,
Rest well assured, no blame you will incur.’
The officers obeyed the maiden’s threat,
Awed by her princely and imposing air :
Then towards the king she hastened. Him she met
As he advanced to greet and honour her.

XLVI ✓

‘ I am Clorinda,’ she exclaimed. ‘ Perchance
To thee, O king, my name is not unknown.
Here have I come to guard with sword and lance
Our common faith, and thy imperilled crown.
Some task impose : ’gainst every toil I am steeled,
Nor fear the great, nor yet disdain the small,
Wilt thou I serve thee in the open field,
Or in the limits of the rampired wall.’

XLVII ✓

She ceased, and thus the king : ‘ O maiden rare,
What land from Asia’s so removed, what zone
So distant lies from the sun’s cycle, where
Thy fame has not arrived, thy glory flown ?
If now thy sabre be with mine conjoined,
All fear departs and brighter prospects ope ;
Not if united armies had combined,
For my deliverance had I surer hope.

XLVIII ✓

‘ Now, then, Prince Godfred, it appears to me,
 Delays his march too long ; and dost thou ask
Employment for thy arm? None’s worthy thee
 But the most difficult and daring task.
I give thee rule over all grades, all ranks ;
 And that shall be the law thou dost ordain.’
Thus spake, and she returned him courteous thanks
 For his eulogium, and resumed again :

XLIX ✓

‘ Though it for certain were great novelty
 That recompense should services precede,
Still I feel sure thou’lt grant this pair to me,
 For future services as present need.
Nay, if there’s any doubt of their offence,
 Most harsh the law to inflict such punishment ;
This I pass over, and the evidence
 From which I judge they both are innocent ;

L ✓

‘ And will but add that the opinion here
 Is that the Christians have the image ta’en.
In this from you I differ, nor appear
 Without good cause this view to entertain.
That was irreverence of our laws which ye,
 Urged by Ismeno, deemed had power to save :
Since in our temples ’twas not fitting we
 Should idols, least of all another’s, have.

LI ✓

‘Wherefore I rather think the Prophet might
Have wrought this miracle to demonstrate
That his immaculate temples ’twas not right
With new religion to contaminate.
Let then Ismeno weave his mystic rites,
He to whom witchcraft stands in place of arms :
But let us draw the sword like gallant knights,
These be our hopes, our arts, our magic charms.’

LII ✓

She ceased. The king, although his iron breast
But seldom bent or was by pity swayed,
Yet fain would yield assent to her request.
Her reasons move him, and her prayers persuade :
‘Let this be grace or justice which I give,
To such a pleader I can nought deny ;
Guiltless I free them, guilty I forgive.
Let them have life,’ he said, ‘and liberty.’

LIII

Thus were they loosed. Olindo’s fate how blest,
By such an act his earnestness to prove !
Since in her generous sympathetic breast
Love had at length awakened mutual love.
Erst lover, now beloved, the criminal goes
From pyre to marriage, while the blushing bride
No longer any hesitation shows
To live with him who for her sake had died.

LIV

Rus?
But the suspicious king would not consent
To have them near, in whom such virtues shine ;
Whence, as he willed, both into exile went,
Beyond the boundaries of Palestine ;
And following up his most inhuman plan,
Some of the Faithful banished, some confined.
Ah, with what heavy hearts they heard his ban,
And left their sons, their sires, their wives behind !

LV

Cruel division ! He drove out alone
Those of strong minds, and those robust in limb ;
But the soft sex, and those not fully grown,
In pledge retained as hostages with him.
Many turned rovers, rebels some ; his threat
Made anger triumph o'er their terror. Thus
They joined the Christian army, which they met
The day on which it entered Emmaus.

LVI

A city Emmaus is, that a short way
From royal Salem separates, and one
Who journeys slowly for his pleasure may,
By starting early, Salem reach at noon.
Oh, how this hearing doth the Christians cheer !
Oh, how their zeal it quickens and foment !
But since the sun was fast declining, here
The captain orders them to pitch their tents.

LVII

They were already pitched, and the sun's light
Was not far distant from the ocean's breast,
When, lo ! two mighty barons loomed in sight,
Of foreign port, and in strange costume dressed ;
Their every act and peaceful bearing showed,
They came as friends, perhaps some news to bring ;
Escorted by a numerous train they rode,
And were the envoys of the Egyptian king.

LVIII

Alethes one, who from most low estate,
E'en from the refuse of the people sprung,
Had reached the highest honours of the state,
By subtle, eloquent, obsequious tongue.
In manner pliant, versatile in wit,
Prompt to dissemble, to deception used ;
Slanders he forged, but still so apposite,
That when they seemed to praise, they most accused.

LIX

Arganté, from Circassia, the other. He
To Egypt came a stranger, and was made
One of the satraps of the monarchy,
And in the army reached the highest grade.
Intolerant, inexorable, fierce,
In arms unmatched, unwearied ; he adored
No god, but scorned, and was to all averse,
Owning no law, no reason, but his sword.

LX

They craved an audience, and admitted were
To Godfred's presence. That illustrious knight
They seated found upon a lowly chair
Among his dukes, in simple garb bedight.
But real worth, though carelessly arrayed,
Is to itself its own bright ornament.
Small sign of honour him Arganté paid,
Like one too grand and too indifferent,

LXI

But on his breast Alethes placed his hand,
Bowed down his head, and bent on earth his eyes,
And, in the fashion of his native land,
His deep respect and reverence testifies.
He then began, and from his lips outsprung
In honeyed streams of eloquence a flood ;
And as the Franks had learned the Syrian tongue,
That which he said was fully understood.

LXII

' O only worthy thou, that this famed band
Of heroes deign obedience unto thee ;
Who through thy counsel and thy powerful hand,
Have kingdoms gained in many a victory ;
E'en that which scorned Alcides' bounds, thy name,
Has to our distant territory sped,
And in all parts of Egypt's realm has Fame
Most brilliant tidings of thy valour spread.

LXIII

‘ Nor ’mid so many of us is there one
Hears it, but as he greatest wonders might.
But my king hears thy exploits not alone
With deep amazement, but extreme delight ;
Well pleased he is thy prowess to record,
Praising in thee what were to others cause
Of envious fear ; and of his own accord
A league now seeks of love, if not of laws.

LXIV

‘ Urged then by such praiseworthy motives, he
Demandeth peace and friendship on thy side,
And if faith cannot, then let virtue be
The means by which ye may become allied.
But having heard that thou hadst armed, to drive
From his dominions Aladine, his friend,
He wished, ere further evils should arrive,
His mind to thee through us, ~~his~~ envoys, send.

✓ LXV

‘ His mind is this : That thou contented rest
With what thou hast gained already in the war ;
Nor Judah, nor the other parts molest,
That by his sovran grace protected are.
He, on the other hand, will guarantee
Thy own not firm position. If ye two
Should in alliance thus united be,
What can the Turk or Persian hope to do ?

LXVI

‘ Important things in a short space thou hast done,
Which time can never in oblivion shade ;
Razed rampired cities, famous battles won,
Surmounted hardships, unknown tracks essayed.
So that or frightened or confounded, sire,
At the mere news, those far and near remain ;
And though thou mayst new provinces acquire,
To acquire fresh glory thou must hope in vain.

LXVII

‘ Thy fame has reached its zenith, and ’twere right
That thou henceforth all dubious wars forswore ;
If conqueror, conquest would increase thy might,
But could not, sire, increase thy glory more :
But should reverses happen, thou wouldst lose
Honour, to mention not each captured state ;
And he is mad at Fortune’s game who throws
Sure stakes ’gainst doubtful, against small ones great.

LXVIII

‘ But the advice of one who, may be, grieves
That others keep for long what they have gained,
In each emprise to have won fresh laurel leaves,
And that innate desire which is ingrained,
And glows most strongly in the strongest core,
To have kings subjected, provinces subdued,
Will make thee peace avoid, it may be, more
Than others war’s most deadly perils would.

LXIX

‘ Such will thee urge to follow to its close
That path now largely opened by the Fates,
And ne’er that celebrated sword depose,
Upon whose valour certain victory waits,
Until a desert Asia’s made by thee,
And Mahmoud’s crescent sinks before the Cross.
Delusions sweet : still, pleasant though they be,
They often end in most disastrous loss.

LXX

‘ But should blind passion not obscure thine eyes,
And cause the light of Truth to disappear,
Thou’lt find in any future enterprise
No cause at all for hope, but much for fear ;
Since Fortune changes—clouded now, now bright—
Varying by turns ; and they who madly soar
In too ambitious and too high a flight,
Are apt to haste their ruinous downfall more.

LXXI

‘ To move ’gainst thee if Egypt once begun,
Powerful in council, arms, and riches ; or
Should it e’er happen that Cassano’s son,
With Turks and Persians leagued, renewed the war ;
What force against their fury canst thou bring,
Or where asylum for thyself provide ?
Thou trust’st perhaps the wicked Grecian king,
Who is to thee by sacred bonds allied ?

LXXII

‘ But who in Grecian faith would credence place ?
From one sole treachery thou may’st gather all ;
Nay, from a thousand : since that faithless race
A thousand schemes has plotted for thy fall.
Think’st thou that he for thee will risk his life—
He who with arms thy host’s advance withstood ?
Will he who barred the roads—which ere the strife
Were free to all—present thee with his blood ?

LXXIII

‘ But all thy hopes thou hast, it may be, set
On these brave squadrons that environ thee,
And think’st perhaps o’er foes combined to get,
As when detached, as easy victory,
Although thy ranks much thinned and lessened are
By hardships and by fighting, as thou know’st ;
Though a new foe has swoln the tide of war,
And Egypt joined the Turk and Persian host.

LXXIV

‘ Still granting that it be thy destiny
Ne’er to be conquered by the hostile sword ;
And granting too that such is Heaven’s decree
As thou presumest it,—still, mighty lord,
Famine will conquer thee : against that ill
What refuge, what protection wilt thou find ?
’Gainst her gaunt form thy broad sword wave, and still
Thy eager hopes with fancied victory blind.

LXXV

‘ But know, the provident inhabitants
With sword and fire have laid the country waste,
And many days before thy host’s advance
In walls impregnable the harvest placed.
Whence, then, dost hope thy horse and foot to feed,
Thou who hast never to this hour repined ?
Thou’lt say, our ships will give us help in need ;
Depends then thy subsistence on the wind ?

LXXVI

‘ Perhaps thy fortune may the winds command,
And at thy pleasure rouse or keep them still ?
The sea, though deaf to others’ prayers, trepanned
By Godfred’s voice, may bow to Godfred’s will ?
Cannot our ships, then, on the ocean meet,
And with the Persians and the Turks combine
To form in one so powerful a fleet
As well may match that armament of thine ?

LXXVII

‘ Thou’lt need, O prince ! a double victory,
Success in this emprise to consummate ;
One sole disaster would occasion thee
Disgrace profound, and losses still more great :
Since, should our fleet a signal victory gain,
And rout thine own, thy camp would famished be ;
And should’st thou lose on land, thy ships in vain
Would ride triumphant o’er the ensanguined sea.

LXXVIII

‘Now if in such condition you refuse
Peace and alliance with our sovran lord
(Pardon the truth), but thy mistaken views
Ill with thy other excellence accord.
But would to Heaven thou would’st thy sabre sheathe,
And change thy mind, that all may changèd be ;
That Asia may, her troubles over, breathe,
And thou enjoy the fruits of victory.

LXXIX

‘And ye, who in each strange vicissitude
Of fame and peril his companions are,
Let not the smiles of Fortune so delude
As to induce you to provoke fresh war ;
But like the sailors, who from treacherous gales
Bring back their vessels to the welcome shore,
Furl up ye should your tempest-tattered sails,
Nor tempt the danger of its breakers more.’

LXXX

Here ceased Alethes, and those valiant knights
Followed with muttered murmuring his speech,
And by their scornful attitudes and slights
Showed how his overtures offended each.
Thrice—aye, four times—the captain turned his eye,
To see how his bold dukes the message took ;
Then upon him who waited his reply
Fixed his full glance, and thus unruffled spoke :

LXXXI

‘Thou hast delivered in most sweet-toned phrase
A message—friendly now, now menacing :
If thy liege love me, and my actions praise,
Pleased I accept the approval of the king ;
But to that part where thou denouncest war
To us from Pagandom’s united swords,
I will reply as wont, ambassador,
Clothing frank sentiments in simple words.

LXXXII

‘Know that so much we have till now endured
By land and sea, in light and darkness all,
But that we might have our great end assured,
And win our way to Salem’s sacred wall,
And thus in God’s rewards participate,
His flock releasing from the oppressor’s hand ;
Nor do we deem it hard, for end so great
To risk our worldly honour, life, and land.

LXXXIII

‘Since no ambitious or unworthy love
Did us to this great enterprise impel ;
May from our breasts the God of heaven remove
A plague so foul, if such in any dwell,
Nor suffer that it moisten or infect
Us with its poison, which, in pleasing, kills ;
But ’tis His hand which gently doth correct
Hard hearts, and in them tenderness instills,

LXXXIV

‘ That has impelled us, that has led us here ;
Relieved us from all danger and delay ;
This makes floods dry, this mountains disappear ;
Takes summer’s heat and winter’s frost away ;
Holds fast or loosens this the blustering squalls ;
Appeases this the billows of the main ;
Hence burned and breached are the most lofty walls,
Hence armed legions scattered are and slain.

LXXXV

‘ Hence courage takes its birth, and hope we greet,
Not from our forces, fragile and fatigued ;
Not from Frank arms, not from the friendly fleet,
Not from the Greeks, if altogether leagued.
So long as God his ægis arm extends,
Though all else fail us, we are not dismayed ;
Who knows both how it strikes and how defends,
In danger’s hour requires no other aid.

LXXXVI

‘ But should our sins or secret judgment doom
Us to the want of his almighty aid,
Which of us would not die to have his tomb
Where his Redeemer’s hallowed limbs were laid ?
Then die we will, nor envy those that live ;
Then die we will, nor unrevengèd die ;
Nor at our fate her smiles will Asia give,
Nor will our death extract from us one sigh.

LXXXVII

'Yet think not we a state of peace refuse,
As one avoids or fears a mortal fight,
Or that we wish thy liege's love to lose,
Or that alliance with his arms we slight.
But about Judah why so careful? lies
It subject to his rule? Let him then cease
To thwart us further in our enterprise,
And his own subjects rule in tranquil peace.'

LXXXVIII

Stung was Arganté to the very core
At Godfred's answer; nor could longer hide
His rampant fury, but advanced before
The captain, and with tumid lips replied:
'Who wills not peace shall have his glut of war;
There lack not causes to unsheathe the sword.
All thoughts of peace thou must indeed abhor,
To slight the terms now offered by our lord.'

LXXXIX

Then took his mantle by the skirt, and made
With it an urn, which he held forth and burst
Into still greater fury, and inveighed
In tones still more spiteful than at first:
'Thou who success wouldst hazard on a die,
Lo, War and Peace within this urn I bear.
Thine the selection be—quick, quick reply!
Take which thou wilt, and further parley spare.'

XC

His taunting attitude and words moved all
To shout for 'War' with simultaneous cry.
They paused not even for their general,
The chivalrous Prince Godfred, to reply.
Unfolding then the urn, he shook his cloak :
'To mortal war I challenge you,' he cried,
And with such fierce and impious gesture spoke,
That Janus' portals seemed to open wide.

XCI

It seemed he poured forth from the fatal urn
Fierce Discord and mad Fury on the land,
And that in his malignant eyeballs burn
Alecto's and Megæra's flaming brand.
Such looked that mighty one, who to the skies
Erected Error's giant pile, and even
So Babel saw his proud defiant eyes
Menace with scornful look the unheeding Heaven.

XCII

Then Godfred added : 'To your king repair
With this my answer, that he come ; meanwhile
Accepted is the war which ye declare,
And should he fail, to expect us at the Nile.'
He then dismissed them in most courteous guise,
And honoured them with gifts of choice display :
To Alethes gave a helmet—a rich prize,
Seized at Nicea with the other prey.

XCHH

A sword upon Arganté he bestowed,
Whose hilt with gold and jewels was embossed ;
And though with lavish brilliancy it glowed,
The value in the workmanship was lost.
But when he had examined narrowly
How rich the sheath was, and the blade how fine,
He said to Godfred : ' Thou wilt shortly see
How I will use this precious gift of thine.' /

XCIV

He then took leave, and to his comrade—' Now
Let us set off at once, our mission done,
I towards Jerusalem, towards Egypt thou ;
I at eve's close, and thou at rise of sun.
No need there is of me or of my art,
Where thou returnest to spread war's alarms ;
Bear thou the answer then : I'll not depart
When honour, trumpet-tongued, invites to arms.' /

XCV

Arrived ambassador, he leaves as foe.
Was it a timely or untimely haste
That had offended ancient use, or no ?
He recks not, nor a single thought doth waste,
Nor heeds reply ; but, chafing at delay,
By friendly silence of the stars proceeds
To the high ramparts ; while no less their stay,
Ill borne impatience in the army breeds.

XCVI

'Tis night ! The winds are hushed, the waters still,
And the mute world is wrapped in death-like sleep ;
The wearied animals—the fish that fill
Clear lakes, or tenant the unfathomed deep ;
The beasts concealed in fold or crouched in lair,
The painted songsters in oblivion gay,
'Neath the deep horrors of the lightless air
Appease their hearts, and dream their cares away.

XCVII

But not the pious chief nor faithful camp
Gives way to sleep, or for a moment rests ;
To see the welcome dawn relume her lamp
Creates such longing in their eager breasts
That their approach it might illumined make
To Salem's walls, the goal of their Crusade :
They watch each moment for one ray to break
And pierce the gloom of night's invidious shade.



CANTO III. ^{Out}

I

X ALREADY was awake the herald air
To announce that fair Aurora 'gan to rise,
Who decked herself and wreathed her golden hair
With fresh-blown roses culled in Paradise ;
When from the camp, ere yet reveillée rung,
There rose a murmur from the deep-toned throats
Of arming thousands. The shrill trumpet's tongue
Then pealed forth livelier and more tuneful notes.

II

The wise commander with paternal care,
Directs their bent and regulates their force ;
Since much more easy near Charybdis 'twere
To turn the rolling billows from their course,
Or Boreas check when down the Apennines
He sweeps, engulfing vessels in the sea.
He orders, starts, by trumpet rules the lines
Rapidly—still by rule, though rapidly.

III

Winged are their eager hearts and winged their feet ;
Unconscious of their speed, on, on, they fly.
But when the advancing sun with fervent heat
Had struck the arid plains and risen on high,
Lo ! fair Jerusalem appears in sight,
Lo ! countless fingers point there, and exclaim
Ten thousand voices that in one unite,
' Hail ! Hail ! Jerusalem, Jerusalem !'

IV

Thus, when a crew of hardy mariners
Lured by the hope of new discoveries, finds
Upon uncertain seas, 'neath unknown stars,
Fallacious waters and deceptive winds,
If they at length behold the wished-for land
Afar salute it with exultant cries ;
Each points it out to each with eager hand,
Forgetting his past toils and miseries.

V

To the great pleasure which that first fond look
Of Salem's walls excited in each breast,
Succeeded deep contrition that partook
Of fear and reverence, by whose weight oppressed
They scarcely dared lift up their longing gaze
To where Christ chose to fix his earthly reign,
There where he died, and where he buried was,
And where triumphantly he rose again.

VI

The mute appeal, the supplicating voice,
The broken sobs, the plaintive wailing sighs
Of those still grieving e'en as they rejoice,
Cause such a murmur through the air to rise
As in dense forests strikes the traveller's ear,
When through its leaves the blasts of autumn pour;
Or as when dashed upon the rocks we hear
With hollow boom the broken billows roar.

VII

Barefoot the soldiers tread the hallowed path,
Each by his captain's meek example led;
His silken scarf and haughty crest each hath
Straightway removed from his now humbled head,
And with it cast aside his heart's proud dress,
While warm repentant tears his eyes suffuse.
Yet as if such could not his grief express,
Each thus repining doth himself accuse:

VIII

'What! where Thou didst, O Lord! bedew the earth,
With countless bloody rivers, may not I
At least two living rivulets pour forth
Of bitter drops in such sad memory?
Art made of ice, my heart, as not to leak
Distilled in tears through these mine eyes? Art thou
So made of stone as not dissolve and break?
Thou 'dst aye deserve to weep, if tearless now.'

IX

Meanwhile the watch that from a tower descries
The mountains and the plain, beheld down there
The circling dust in such dense volumes rise,
That a cloud seemed imprinted in the air :
It seemed to flash with lurid light and blaze,
As pregnant with fierce flames and lightning's force
Now marked the sheen of steel's refulgent rays,
And now distinguished even man and horse.

(x)

Doubting no more, he raised the loud alarm :
'What dust I see, and how it seems to shine'
Up, up, O citizens ! arm, quickly arm !
And for defence the embattled ramparts line,
The foe's already here : ' and then more loud,
'Haste to your arms ! arise, I say arise !
Behold the enemy, he's here ; yon cloud
Of lurid dust behold that veils the skies.'

XI

Unarmed old age, and simple innocence,
The crowd of women smitten with despair,
Unfit alike for onslaught or defence,
Mournful and suppliant to the mosques repair.
The rest, who on stout hearts and hands depend,
Snatch up their trusty arms ; some man the wall,
Others rush off the portals to defend ;
The king goes round, provides, and sees to all.

XII

He gave his orders quickly and withdrew,
Where 'twixt two gates a turret soars on high, (2)
So that in need he's near, and whence the view
Of each high land seems lower to the eye.
Thither he bade Erminia to repair,
Lovely Erminia whom his court received
When the Frank troops had captured Antioch, where
She was of her dear sire, the king, bereaved.

XIII

Clorinda then spurred forth to meet the Franks, (3)
Many went with her, but she led them all,
While at the sally-port Arganté ranks
His troops for rescue, should she backward fall :
Nor failed the fair her followers to incite
By her bold words and bearing for the fray.
'By good beginnings,' she exclaimed, 'tis right
That we found Asia's future hopes to-day.'

XIV

Even as she spoke, not distant far was seen
A troop of Franks removing rustic prey.
They, as their wont, a foraging had been,
And with their spoil now campwards bent their way.
She against them, and in a fatal hour
'Gainst her advanced their chief, who marked her course —
Gardo by name, a soldier of great power,
But yet not one that could resist her force.

XV

By that fierce shock Gardo was hurled afar
Upon the earth, 'neath Franks' and Pagans' eyes ;
At which the latter shout, and of the war
Infer propitious but false auguries ;
Then spurring on, she closed in with the rest.
Equal to hundreds her sole arm appeared,
While her bold followers through the passage pressed,
Which her fierce charge had oped, and broad sword cleared.

XVI

Soon from the spoiler is redeemed the spoil,
And slow fell back the Franks until they found
A hill on which they rallied for a while,
Being there supported by the rising ground.
Then as a whirlwind is unloosed, or falls
A thunderbolt from the offended skies,
The gallant Tancred, to whom Godfred calls,
Couches his lance and to the rescue flies ;

XVII

And bears so firmly its great weight, and seems,
Though young, so brave and graceful in the fight,
That, watching from on high, the tyrant deems
Amid the choicest he's a chosen knight.
Whence to the maiden at his side he cries
(Whose breast already did strong tremors feel),
' From such long habit thou must recognise
Each Christian knight, although encased in steel ;

XVIII

'Who then is he who doth the rest eclipse
In graceful port, and doth so fierce appear?'
Mute was Erminia's tongue, but to her lips
Sprang a soft sigh, and to her lids a tear:
Though checking somewhat both her tears and sighs,
She still perceptible emotion shows,
Since a red circle stained her pregnant eyes,
And a deep sigh but half suppressed arose.

XIX

Then answered, but equivocating was,
And other passion hid 'neath hate's disguise:
'Ah me! I know him well, and have good cause
Amid a thousand him to recognise,
Since I have often seen him strew the ground
And fill the trenches with my people's gore.
Ah me! how cruel are his blows; the wound
He gives, no herb, no magic can restore.

XX

'Tancredi is his name. Ah would he were
My captive once! I do not wish him dead;
I want him living, that my fierce desire
By sweet revenge might be alleviated.'
While speaking thus, the truth her language shaped,
Was by the king in other meaning ta'en;
And, mingling with her closing words, escaped
A deep-drawn sigh which she repressed in vain.

XXI

Clorinda, meanwhile, with her lance in rest,
Dashed forth to meet Tancredi. As they closed,
Each struck the other fiercely on the crest,
And by the shock she was in part exposed,
Since rent her helmet's straps; from off her head
It with a bound (oh, wondrous stroke) did fall,
And as the breeze her golden locks outspread,
A youthful damsel she appeared to all.

XXII

Then flashed her eyes, and shone her lightning glance;
Sweet even in wrath, what were it an she smiled?
What think'st of, Tancred? That fair countenance
Forgettest thou, that so thy heart beguiled?
This is the face that burned thee to the core,
As it—since there its image lives—can tell;
This same is she whom thou beheld'st of yore
Her brow refreshing at the lonely well.

XXIII

He who at first had not remarked her crest
And blazoned shield, stood petrified, while she,
Covering her head as best she could, still pressed
The fierce assault; and back retreated he,
And against others whirled his cruel brand,
Yet not the less obtained her grace. She cried,
Him following with loud menace, 'Turn and stand,
And to a double death her foe defied.

XXIV

Though struck the knight, he striketh not, nor seeks
So much his personal safety from the foe
As to behold her lovely eyes and cheeks,
Whence Cupid bends his unavoidable bow ;
And to himself : ' Void are at times the blows
That her armed hand delivers, but each dart
Launched from her fair and unarmed features goes
Straight to its goal, and penetrates my heart.'

XXV

Of pity hopeless, he resolved at length
To tell his passion, nor in silence die,
And let her know she threw away her strength
On one already in captivity ;
Whence, ' Cruel maid, that seem'st to have,' he cried,
' Me for thy foe alone of all these swarms,
Retire we from this turmoil, and aside
In mortal strife make trial of our arms :

XXVI

' Then will be seen if my strength equals thine.'
To his request Clorinda gave assent,
Nor at the loss of helmet did repine,
But boldly she, while he disheartened, went.
Prepared for battle stood the martial maid,
And had already struck the enamoured knight,
When ' Hold, and let us make,' Tancredi said,
' In the first place conditions for the fight.'

XXVII

She stayed her arm ; wild feelings of despair
A reckless courage to the knight impart.
' Since,' he exclaimed, ' all peace thou dost forswear,
The terms shall be that thou pluck out my heart.
My heart, no more mine own, if not thy will
That it should live, a willing victim dies ;
'Tis thine long since, nor is the moment ill
For thee to consummate its sacrifice.

XXVIII

' Lo, I cast down my hands and thee present
My breast without defence : why strike not there ?
Or shall I ease the task, I am content
To doff my breastplate and my bosom bare.'
Then wretched Tancred in more sad laments
Had told perhaps the story of his woe,
But him the arrival, most ill-timed, prevents,
Of his own troops, and of the Pagan foe.

XXIX

Charged by the Christian host the Syrians yield ;
Was it from fear or stratagem designed ?
When a barbarian scouring o'er the field
Saw her loose tresses dangling in the wind ;
And, passing in the rear, upraised his arm
To strike in that defenceless part the maid :
But Tancred, who observed it, gave the alarm,
And the great blow received upon his blade.

XXX

Yet went it not in vain, but struck her where
The lovely head springs from the snowy neck ;
Slight was the wound, still her gold-coloured hair
Some drops of blood with crimson patches fleck.
So flashes gold when with carbuncles set,
It sparkles from some skilful artist's hand.
The infuriate prince, with many a muttered threat,
Dashed at the wretch, and tighter grasped his brand.

XXXI

Away he fled ; burning with rage, the knight
Pursued. They flew like arrows through the air :
Perplexed she stands, and keeps both long in sight,
Yet deigns not follow the retreating pair,
But doth the fugitives accompany,
And now shows front and seeks the Franks in fight,
Now turns, returns, flies, makes the Christians fly,
Nor could one say if hers were chase or flight.

XXXII

Thus if the bull in spacious circus turn
His threatening horns against pursuing hounds,
They quick retreat, but should he fly, return,
And each to follow with fresh ardour bounds.
To guard her head, her shield Clorinda kept
Over her shoulders, as she sought the walls :
In Moorish games the players thus intercept,
Thus balk the fury of the flying balls. (4)

XXXIII

✓ Pursuing Frank and flying Infidel
Had nearly reached the lofty ramparts, when
The wily Pagans raised a horrid yell,
And of a sudden drove them back again.
A circuit wide they made, nor turned, until
They in reverse could strike their rear and flanks ;
Meantime, Arganté moved down from the hill,
To charge in front their now surrounded ranks.

XXXIV

The fierce Circassian dashed forth with a bound ;
Eager to give first blow he led the van,
And him he struck he stretched upon the ground,
And in one heap rolled over horse and man ;
And ere his lance in shivers flew, had sent
Many to bear him company ; nor ceased,
But drew his sabre, which, when home it went,
Aye slew, struck down, or caused some wound at least.

XXXV

Clorinda, jealous of his glory, slew
The strong Ardelio, who of years mature
Was still untamed by age. With him were two
Great sons : yet even he was not secure,
Since a bad wound had from his father's care
Removed Alcander ; and 'twas all that brave
Young Polypherne could do, who still stood near
(So closely pressed he was), himself to save.

XXXVI

But Tancred, finding that he could not gain
That villain mounted on a fleeter horse,
Looked back, and saw too far upon the plain
His gallant troop had urged their daring course :
Saw them surrounded. Quickly turning rein,
He pricked his steed, and galloped straightway there,
Nor did his arm alone his friends sustain :
Down came those ready for all risks : they were

XXXVII

Dudon's squadron of Adventurers,
Flower of the camp, its sinew, and its force ;
Noblest and fairest, young Rinaldo spurs
Before them all, like lightning on his course.
Erminia quickly knew his cognisance,
The eagle argent on the azure field,
And to the king, who marked his bold advance :
' Behold the brave, to whom the bravest yield.

XXXVIII

' As cavalier, he but few equals knows,
Or none at all, and though a stripling still,
Were there six other such amid thy foes,
All Syria now were subject to their will :
The realms most southward had already been
Subdued, aye, all the orient by their force ;
And perhaps the Nile had from their power in vain
Concealed his distant and mysterious source.

XXXIX

‘ His name’s Rinaldo ; the strong ramparts fear
His angered arm more than a huge machine.
Now turn thine eyes : behold yon cavalier,
Emblazed whose armour is with gold and green ;
That is Dudoné, by whose arm is led
This very squadron of Adventurers ;
Of lofty lineage and experienced head,
He most in worth transcends, and all in years.

XL

‘ Seest thou that giant cased in brown ? he is
Gernando, brother of great Norway’s king ;
The world hath not a prouder soul, and this
Alone a shade o’er his deserts doth fling.
There are the two for ever joined in one,
Whose arms and every ornament are white :
Gildippé, Edward, who renown have won
As no less leal in love than staunch in fight.’

XLI

Meanwhile they saw beneath, as thus she spoke,
How more and more the combat thickened ; when
Through the ring Tancred and Rinaldo broke,
Though bristling it with flashing arms and men.
Dudoné’s squadron then came thundering on,
Cutting and thrusting, when before their eyes
Arganté’s self, Arganté is struck down
By young Rinaldo, and can scarcely rise.

XLII

Nor had he risen, but at that moment sank
Rinaldo's gallant charger in the fray,
His foot remaining 'neath the horse's flank,
And struggling he to drag it thence away.
Meanwhile, the routed Saracens repair
To the town's shelter, flying like the wind ;
Alone, Arganté and Clorinda were
A mound and trench against the storm behind.

XLIII

They were the last to bear the battle's brunt,
And stem the torrent surging in their rear,
Which made it easy for all those in front,
To escape the Christians that still followed near.
Dudoné, flushed with victory, overthrew
Tigranes by a charge of his bold horse ;
His sabre then the veteran soldier drew,
And on the greensward stretched the headless corse.

XLIV

What now avails thy corslet, Algazar ?
Corbano, what thy helmet's steel-bound crest ?
Since through your nape and back he pierced so far,
That the point issued at the face and breast.
His arm expelled then from their sweet abode
The souls of Amurath and Mahomet ;
Almansor's too ; nor e'en Arganté could
Securely stir, so close was he beset.

XLV

With frantic rage the great Circassian burned,
Now stopped, faced round, still yielded to the Frank.
At length so suddenly on him he turned,
And caught him with such fury on the flank,
That his sword's point therein was buried deep,
And by the blow the Christian leader slain.
He falls : unwelcome rest and iron sleep
Weigh down those lids that scarce can ope again.

XLVI

Yet thrice he oped them, and heaven's pleasant light
Sought to enjoy ; and thrice his body raised
Upon his arm, thrice fell. The shades of night
In death at last his languid eyeballs glazed ;
His limbs relax, a mortal icy chill
Stiffens and bathes them in a dank cold sweat.
Arganté paused not o'er the corse, but still
Pushed on ahead with undiminished whet.

XLVII

With that, although he ceased not to give way,
Turned to the Franks he cried, ' This blood-stained sword,
Is the same precious gift that yesterday
Was to myself presented by your lord ;
Tell him how I to-day have used it. He
Such welcome news most willingly will hear ;
Nay, should rejoice that its great value be
Established by probation so severe.

XLVIII

‘ Tell him its point he may expect to see
In his own bowels, as a proof more sure ;
And should he haste not his attack on me,
I will the means to find him out procure.’
The Franks, incensed at his insulting speech,
Rushed to cut down the braggart, but with all
The rest he fled beyond the Christians’ reach,
’Neath the safe shelter of the friendly wall.

XLIX

Its stout defenders then to hail began
Such showers of stones on their advancing foes,
And countless quivers in each barbican
Supplied such flights of arrows to their bows,
That the Frank troops compelled were to recede,
And let the Pagans gain the sheltering town,
When, his foot having from his fallen horse freed,
In eager haste Rinaldo thundered down.

L

He sought dire vengeance ’gainst the homicide
Who had so brutally Dudoné slain,
And having reached his squadron, proudly cried,
‘ What wait ye for ? Why thus inert remain ?
Since dead is he who was our leader—why
Not hasten forward to avenge his fall ?
What ! with such cause for animosity,
Blench at the barrier of a fragile wall ?



‘Not, if yon wall impenetrable were,
Of adamant or doubled iron made,
Could fierce Arganté find protection there,
Or there the vigour of your arms evade ;
On to the assault—advance !’ As thus he spoke,
Before them all the youthful hero sprang ;
His fearless forehead feared no hostile stroke,
Though showers of stones and arrows round him rang.

LII

And tossing his haught head he raised his glance,
With such portentous resolution filled,
That even inside the walls the combatants
Were to the heart by fright unwonted chilled.
But while the slack he menaced, and fresh cheer
Gave to the valiant, crippled were his hands,
Since to him Godfred sent the good Sigier,
Grave rigid messenger of grave commands.

LIII

He in his name chid his excessive fire,
And bade him his adventurous steps retrace.
‘Return,’ he cried ; ‘for this display of ire
Ill-fitting is the season and the place.
Thus Godfred orders.’ From the strong redoubt
Rinaldo, who had spurred the rest, withdraws,
Although he fumed within and showed without
How disappointed at being baulked he was.

LIV

The Franks retired, nor by the Pagan force
Or menaced or disturbed was their retreat;
Nor was defrauded brave Dudoné's corse
Of its last honours, but with reverence meet,
On sympathising arms his faithful friends
That precious and most honoured burden bore.
Godfred meanwhile an eminence ascends,
The city's site and fences to explore.

LV

Upon two ridges of unequal height,(5)
That front each other, stands Jerusalem,
Through which there runs a narrow vale, whose site
Divides the town in two, and severs them.
Three sides a steep ascent the place defends,
But on the fourth you go, nor seem to rise,
And this plain side, which towards the north extends,
By loftiest ramparts more defended is.

LVI

Inside, the town has cisterns to amass
The falling rain, and living springs and pools;
Outside, the country round is bare of grass,
Nor fount nor stream the barren region cools;
Nor trees are seen in all the neighbourhood
A screen 'gainst summer's heat to interpose,
Save where, beyond six miles, a gloomy wood
Horrent and dark its baleful shadow throws.

LVII

On that side whence the dawn's first splendours rise,
The blessed Jordan's noble waters roll;
And to the west the sandy seaboard lies
Of the blue Mediterranean. Towards the pole
Samaria lies, and pillared Bethel, where
To the gold calf was raised the impious shrine;
And where the south with vapour loads the air,
Stands Bethlehem, hallowed by the birth Divine.

LVIII

Now as Prince Godfred scanned the country round,
The city's site, the lofty walls, and thought
Where for his army was best camping ground,
And the easiest spot to storm the ramparts sought,
Erminia saw, and to the tyrant spoke,
Him clearly pointing with her finger: 'There,
That Godfred is, who in the purple cloak
Has such a royal and majestic air.

LIX

'He looks indeed one born to hold command,
And as a ruler is without compeer,
Of equal merit is his head and hand,
As captain perfect and as cavalier;
Nor 'mid yon host a more consummate knight
Or sager counsellor than he is known.
Rinaldo and Tancredi in the fight,
In council, Raymond, equal him alone.'

LX

‘Him,’ the king answered, ‘I remember well,
And once beheld at the great court of France
When there as Egypt’s envoy, and can tell
How nobly in the lists he bore his lance ;
And though lush spring had scattered not the seeds
Of down upon his cheek, still in his mien,
In his staid language and heroic deeds,
Promise, e’en then, of loftiest hopes was seen.

LXI

‘Promise, alas ! too true.’ His troubled eyes
Here he cast down ; then raised them up and said,
‘Tell me who’s he that with him almost vies,
And wears his surcoat, too, of royal red ?
Oh, what resemblance to the prince, though he
Somewhat in stature to the captain cedes.’
‘That’s Baldwin : truly in his looks you see
He’s brother, but much more so by his deeds.

LXII

‘Now look at that stern cavalier who stays,
As if adviser, on the captain’s right,
That Raymond is, to whom I gave such praise
For prudence, now from age’s silver white ;
To weave war’s stratagems none better knows,
Or Frank or Latin. He still further on,
With the gold casque upon his royal brows,
Is William, the English king’s accomplished son.

LXIII

/ 'Close by stands Guelpho, his competitor
In birth, in station, and in deeds of fame ;
Well, well I know him by those shoulders square,
And by the expansion of that bulky frame.
But though amid yon squadrons I have tried,
As yet I cannot my arch-foeman trace ;
I mean Boëmondo—the red homicide—
The fell destroyer of my royal race.'

LXIV

Thus these conversed : but when the country round
Godfred had scanned, he to his troops went down,
And since he deemed where springs the steepest ground
That it were useless to assault the town,
He pitched his tents with true strategic skill
'Gainst the north gate, upon the adjoining plain ;
Thence ranged the others, which extended till
The so-called Angle Tower the long lines gain.(6)

LXV

The camp embraced with its vast cirque of tents
A third part of the town. For all around,
So great Jerusalem's circumference,
They were not able wholly to surround.
But still to bar the roads Prince Godfred tries,
By which the foe might get external aid,
And all the likely passes occupies
That to and from the royal city led.

LXVI

Then orders them to fortify the tents
With pallisades and deep-cut trenches. So
Alike the townsmen's sallies he prevents,
And checks incursions from marauding foe ;
But when the works accomplished were, his course
(Wishing to see the slaughtered chief) he bends
To where surrounded lay Dudoné's corse
By a sad concourse of lamenting friends.

LXVII

With noble pomp they, faithful, had adorned
The imposing coffin, where sublime he lay.
When Godfred entered, the sad mourners mourned
More sadly, and to greater grief gave way ;
But his own feelings pious Godfred reined.
Not calm—and yet not troubled—was his look,
In deep reflection silent he remained,
As for awhile he gazed on him, then spoke :

LXVIII

' We should not weep for thee, lost friend, nor grieve,
Who dead on earth, in heaven art born again ;
E'en here, where thou thy mortal veil dost leave,
Deep traces of thy glory still remain.
As Christian soldier thou hast lived and died ;
Go then, rejoice, and feed thy longing eyes,
O happy soul, on God ; who will provide
For thy good deeds on earth, his heavenly prize.

LXIX

' Live blessed thou : it is our hapless fate,
Not thy ill-fortune, that draws forth our tears,
Since in thy exit to a happier state,
A very host of warriors disappears.
But if what's commonly called Death, thee slain,
Deprive our forces of terrestrial aid,
Thou canst for us celestial aid obtain,
Since one of God's elected angels made.

LXX

' And as we have seen that mortal arm of thine
In our behalf wield mortal weapons, even
So let us hope to see thee, shade divine,
Employ for us the immortal arms of heaven.
Hear and receive then the requests that we
Now make, and grant us thy all-powerful aid.
Procure our triumph, and our vows to thee,
We victors, at the Temple shall be paid.'

LXXI

Thus spake ; already the last sunbeams were
By night's Cimmerian shadows overspread ;
And by oblivion of all carking care,
Were tears and lamentations respited.
But the anxious chief, who deemed he ne'er could storm
Without some battering-rams the frowning keep,
Thinks where to find the beams, and in what form
Make the machines, and gets but little sleep ;

LXXII

And with the sun rose up, since he proposed
Following the corse to its last resting-place.
Of cypress was Dudoné's tomb composed,
Near the stockades and at a mountain's base,
And overshadowing it a lofty palm,
Its spreading boughs, the type of honour, flung.
Here laid he was, and here with many a psalm,
The priests a requiem to his spirit sung.

LXXIII

And here and there among its branches were
The various arms, his captive spoil, displayed,
In happier battles won by him--whilère
In Persian wars and Palestine crusade.
The trunk they covered in most martial guise
With his great corslet, and to note their loss
Beneath was written, 'Here Dudoné lies :
Honour the noblest champion of the Cross.'

LXXIV

But when the prince had left the ceremony,
So sad and sacred, for the imperial tent,
All the camp's workmen to the forest he
With a strong escort of picked soldiers sent.
It to the Franks a Syrian herd did show :
It lies concealed 'mid valleys deep and dense ;
Thither to hew the great machines they go,
'Gainst which the town can make but poor defence.

LXXV

With cheering cries they on each other call
To fell the trees, nor spare the wood's repose.
The mountain ash and sacred palm tree fall
Beneath the fury of their trenchant blows ;
Funereal cypress, the green-oak and pine,
The umbrageous holm-oak, lofty fir and beech,
The married elm, to which the fragile vine
Clings for support and fain the heavens would reach.

LXXVI

Some strike the yews, others the lordly oaks
That have a thousand times their leaves renewed,
And noiseless stood against the thousand shocks
Of winter's blast, repelled them and subdued.
Of odorous ash and cedar some prepared
On creaking wheels the perfumed load to rest,
By crash of axe and other noises scared,
Beasts leave their den, and frightened birds their nest.



CANTO IV.

I

WHILE thus the Franks their warlike engines made,
To have them ready for their high emprise,
Man's mighty foe from Acheron's gloomy shade,
Against the Christians turned his livid eyes ;
And seeing them on their pious work intent,
Bit both his lips, with rankling fury stung ;
While like a wounded bull his rage found vent
In bellowing roars that through Gehenna rung.

II

Then having turned his every thought to bring
Upon the Christians ruin most complete,
His legions are commanded by their king
(Terrific council !) round his throne to meet,
As though a light emprise—insensâte !—'twere
The Heavenly Will's fixed purpose to withstand.
Fool ! that would try to equal God, or dare
Forget the thunders of his angered hand !

III

The Stygian trump's discordant jangling blast
Through hell's eterne obscurity resounded ;
Shook the black caverns of the dreary vast,
And from its din the lightless air rebounded.
Such crashing peals Heaven never thundered forth,
When mortals threatening with its fiery doom ;
With greater violence ne'er quaked the earth,
Compressing vapours in her pregnant womb.

IV

Straightway the gods of hell in several swarms
Rushed to the lofty gates from all around.
Oh, what strange shapes they had—what horrid forms '
What dread—what death in their gaunt eyeballs frowned '
With cloven foot some print the burning soil,
Whose human heads contorted snakes entwined ;
And like a scourge in many a sinuous coil,
Voluminous tails the hybrids drag behind.

V

Here countless filthy Harpies you might mark ;
Centaur by thousands ; Sphinxes, Gorgons pale ;
Voracious Scyllas without number bark ;
Huge Pythons hiss, and hideous Hydras wail.
Dark lurid flames misshaped Chimæras pour ;
Here Polyphemus stalks, there Geryon ;
And monsters strange ne'er seen or known before,
With looks diverse, confused, and blent in one.

VI

Some on the left side ; others of the band
Stood on the right, hell's ruthless king before ;
I' the centre sat grim Pluto, his right hand
A ponderous mace, the sovran emblem, bore.
No sea-girt rock, no cliff with head so reared,
Not Calpé, no, nor Atlas, but had now,
Compared with him, a little mound appeared,
So towered aloft his mighty horns and brow.

VII

Horrific majesty increased the dread
Of his fierce look, and did its pride enhance ;
His eyes, infect with poison, were blood-red ;
Like baleful comet shone his murderous glance ;
Matted and thick fell down his grisly beard,
And o'er his breast in tangled masses flowed ;
Like a deep gulf his cavern-jaws appeared,
Beslubbered over with black, clotted blood.

VIII

Like Mongibello's suffocating smoke,
Like to its stench and thunder you'd compare ;
The fetid blasts, that in dense volumes broke
From his foul throat ; alike the sparkles were.
While speaking, Cerberus his bark allayed ;
Mute was the Hydra at its lord's harangue ;
The abysses shook—his course Cocytus stayed,
As through all hell his thundering accents rang.

IX

‘Tartarean gods ! more worthy far are ye
Above the sun, where ye were born, to sit,
Whom the great Fall hurled headlong down with me
From happier regions to this gloomy pit.
Other’s old passions and suspicions are
But too well known, not less our great emprise.
Alas ! how changed. His will now rules each star,
And we are deemed but rebels in His eyes.

X

‘And in the place of day’s unclouded bliss,
Of circling stars, and the sun’s golden fire,
Here He has mewed us, in this dark abyss,
Nor wills that we to our first rank aspire.
Then (ah, how hard its memory is to bear !
This is what doth the sharpest sting convey)
He summoned man His blest abode to share,
Man ! abject man ! vile earth-born child of clay !

■

‘Nor did that seem enough. His Son accurst
He made Death’s prey, to aggravate our loss,
Who came, and through hell’s fiery portals burst,
And with bold foot our threshold dared to cross ;
And thence dragged souls that were by right our share,
And our rich prey replaced in heaven’s retreat ;
And in despite of us, in triumph there
Displayed the flags that told of hell’s defeat.

XII

‘ But why my grief by idle words renew ?
Who of our wrongs is ignorant, and where
Or when did He desist to injure you,
Or from His wonted stratagems forbear ?
Remembrance of the past we should not wake,
When every thought our present sufferings claim ;
For see ye not how He attempts to make
All lands bow down in homage to His name ?

XIII

‘ Shall we then waste in sloth the days and hours,
And in cold-blooded apathy remain ?
What ! let in Asia these accursed Giaours,
His faithful flock, still further laurels gain,
Extend His honour, and exalt His praise ?
Subject Judea, and His name make known ?
Sound it in other tongues, in other lays,
On bronzes write it, and incise in stone ?

XIV

‘ What ! see our cherished idols overthrown,
And to His service our loved altars turned ?
To Him suspended vows—to Him alone
Offered up gold, and myrrh, and incense burned ?
And where ’gainst us no temple closed its door,
Shall none now open to our arts remain ?
Shall souls, once ours, rich tribute pay no more,
And in a desert kingdom Pluto reign ?

XV

‘ No, no, it shall not be, since that fierce zeal
That fired of yore our spirits is not lost,
With which, when girt with lambent flame and steel,
We boldly fought against the heavenly host.
Worsted by them we were, I can’t deny ;
Still valour nobly our great scheme sustained,
And though they then obtained the victory,
With us the glory of the attempt remained.’

XVI

‘ But why detain you, faithful comrades, more ?
Away, my strength ; my peerless force, away !
Go, crush these wicked fanatics, before
Still further stablished is their crescent sway.
And ere the kingdom of Judea burn,
Quench the fierce flames it threatening to consume ;
Among them enter, and adopt in turn
Now force, now fraud, to speed their final doom.’

XVII

‘ Let what I will be Fate. Let some remove
Far from the camp ; let some be slain, the while
That others, sunk in wanton cares of love,
Their idols make of a sweet glance and smile.
Against their rulers turn the traitorous steel
Of a divided and rebellious race ;
Let the camp perish, nor one stone reveal
Of its once whereabouts the slightest trace.’

XVIII

To wait, those rebel spirits did not deign
Till brought were his instructions to an end ;
But flying forth to see the stars again,
From the dark realms of endless night ascend,
Like raging storms resounding from afar,
When bursting from the caverns of their birth,
To cloud heaven's azure face, and carry war
O'er the vast regions of the sea and earth.

XIX

With vans expanded, through the various parts
Of the wide world they spread themselves, and straight
Began to use their old infernal arts,
And new and diverse frauds to fabricate ;
But say, O Muse ! how first with loss they smote
The Christian forces, and from whence it came.
Thou know'st it ; but of deeds so far remote
Has scarcely reached us the faint breath of fame.

XX

Prince Idraotes, a famed wizard, reigned
O'er proud Damascus and the cities near ;
He from his early youth had knowledge gained
Of magic, and now prized it more than e'er.
But what availed it, could he not the end
Of the great conflict, doubtful still, foretell ?
Nor from the fixed or wandering stars portend
The truth, nor yet from oracles of hell ?

XXI

He judged (ah, poor, short-sighted mind of man,
How vain, how warped the judgments of thy breast !)
That Heaven did ruin and destruction plan
Against the unconquered army of the West ;
But deeming in the end the Egyptians would
The laurels of the enterprise obtain,
He wished his people in the victory should
As well the profit as the glory gain.

XXII

Still fearing that the war might bloody be,
And to himself result in certain loss,
He 'gan to think by what contrivance he
Might shake the nascent influence of the Cross,
So that the Egyptians with his troops combined
With greater ease the Franks might triumph o'er.
His evil genius came while in this mind
He was, and spurred and egged him on still more.

XXIII

He counselled him, and ministered the ways
That would the labour of the emprise decrease.
A maid, to whom all Asia gave the praise
Of greatest beauty, was the wizard's niece.
The frauds most skilful and the arts most fine
Of witch and woman she completely knew :
Whence her he called, imparted his design,
Which he entreated her to carry through.

XXVII

The fair Armida, of her beauty proud,
And of the gifts her sex and youth imparts,
Accepts the charge, and beneath twilight's shroud,
By the most lone and secret paths, departs ;
And, with her woman's robe and flowing hair,
Hopes to o'ercome an armed unconquered race ;
While of her flight a thousand rumours are
On purpose spread and scattered through the place.

XXVIII

Few days elapsed ere reached the damsel where
Stood ranged in order the Crusaders' tents.
At the appearance of such beauty rare
A buzz arose ; all gazed in rapt suspense,
As if in heaven, in the broad light of day,
Resplendent shone a comet or a star ;
And round her flocked the Christians to survey
And learn the errand of the pilgrim fair.

XXIX

Not Argos, Delos, nor did Cyprus e'er
Such model see of beauty or of mien ;
Wimpled in snowy gauze, her golden hair
Now flashes through, now all exposed is seen :
So when the skies clear up, erst veiled in haze,
Through fleecy clouds the sun transparent shines,
Now bursting forth, still brighter beams displays,
And in redoubled light the day enshrines.

W. W. W.

XXX

Through her loose tresses, waved by Nature, steals
 (Crisping fresh curls therein) the sportive air ;
Her glance, concentrated in itself, conceals
 Love's treasure and its own with miser care.
In her fair cheek the damask of the rose
 With ivory's white diffuses and combines ;
But her sweet lips—whence air, love-breathing, blows—
 The simple rose unmixed encarnadines.

XXXI ✓

Her beauteous bosom flaunts its naked snows,
 Whence is awaked and fed Love's ardent fire ;
Her breasts in part their budding charms disclose,
 In part are hidden by her envious tire.
Envious ! But if to sight it bars approach,
 It cannot check the amorous thoughts, which, not
Content with mere external form, encroach
 And penetrate to the most secret spot.

XXXII ✓

And as through water or clear glass a ray
 Passes entire, nor parts it nor divides,
So through the barrier robe thought makes its way,
 And to forbidden places boldly glides.
There spatiates freely, there the truth surveys
 Of each rare marvel separately ; and thence
The lovely picture to desire displays,
 And with fresh fuel its fierce flame foment.

XXXIII

Admired and courted, through the love-smit files
Armida passes, and perceives her power,
But shows it not, though in her heart she smiles,
Designing thence rich spoil in victory's hour.
Meanwhile, perplexed somewhat, she sought a guide,
To lead her to the captain of the host,
When youthful Eustace darted to her side,
Brother of him who held that sovran post.

XXXIV

He to the splendour of her beauty flew,
Attracted as gay butterfly to light,
And turned more closely those fair eyes to view,
That drooped with decent shame before his sight ;
Whence he inhaled and caught their fervid flame,
As tinder does when near a glowing fire,
And to her said, since he now bold became
From heat of youth and from intense desire :

XXXV

' Lady !—if such a name be not misplaced,
Since thou resemblest nothing upon earth,
Nor is there one of Adam's daughters graced
With such appearance of celestial birth—
Say what thou seek'st from us : whence com'st, and how ?
What brings thee here ? Ah, tell me, I entreat,
Who, what thou art, that I in homage bow,
Or, if it need, fall prostrate at thy feet !'

XXXVI

She answered him : ' Thy praises soar too high ;
To such a height my merit hath not flown.
A thing thou seest too truly mortal : I,
To joy long dead, exist for grief alone.
Into this camp by harsh misfortune thrust,
An outcast maid, a stranger, I resort
For help to pious Godfred, whom I trust :
Such is of his great goodness the report.

XXXVII

' Thither find means my errant steps to guide,
If, as it seems, thou good and courteous art.'
' 'Tis right that to one brother,' he replied,
' Another leads thee, ay, and takes thy part.
Relief, fair maid, thou seekest not in vain,
Since that, at my request, he will afford ;
Thou canst, as best it pleaseth thee, obtain
The assistance of his sceptre or my sword.'

XXXVIII

He ceased, and led the blushing damsel where,
Apart, Prince Godfred with his dukes conferred.
To him she bowed with meek respectful air,
Yet uttered not, from bashfulness, a word ;
But her the courteous paladin consoled,
And so removed her diffidence and fears,
That she at length her artful story told,
In tones whose melody entranced all ears.

XXXIX

‘Unconquered prince,’ she said, ‘whose glorious name
Flies, pranked with ornaments so passing bright,
That kings and provinces esteem it fame
Defeat to suffer at thy hands in fight,
Known is thy valour everywhere, and so
Approved and valued is thy worth that we,
Thy very foes, our blind reliance show
By aid imploring, in our straits, from thee.

XL

‘Thus I, though born in faith so opposite,
Which thou wouldst humble by exhaustive wars,
Hope to regain through thee, magnanimous knight,
The throne and sceptre of my ancestors ;
If others seek assistance from their own,
Themselves to rescue from the stranger’s yoke,
I, since my kin have no compassion shown,
’Gainst my own blood thy hostile steel invoke.

XLI

‘On thee I call and hope ; alone canst thou
Replace me on that height whence I was thrown ;
Nor shouldst thou be less prompt to raise the low,
Than from their seats to cast the mighty down ;
Nor prize the vaunt of tender pity’s trait
Less than the brilliant triumphs thou hast won ;
And if, from many, realms thou hast ta’en away,
Win equal fame by now restoring one.

XLV

‘ Whence he assumed my guardianship, and feigned
For my well-being such concern that he
The vaunt of boundless piety obtained,
Of love paternal and fidelity ;
Or that black thoughts, beneath outside most fair,
To hide within his bosom he begun ;
Or that his love was really sincere,
Since he would make me consort of his son.

XLVI

‘ I grew, and grew his son ; but never he
Or style of knight or noble arts acquired ;
Dead to all sense of fame or chivalry,
His grovelling nature ne’er aloft aspired.
His form deform was than his mind more fair,
His pride unbounded as his avarice ;
His acts so coarse, and such his habits were,
That he could match himself alone in vice.

XLVII

‘ Now my good guardian destined I should wed
This worthy youth, on him my goods bestow,
Him making consort of my throne and bed :
He many times distinctly told me so.
To accomplish this long-cherished scheme, now tact,
Now subtle wit, now eloquence he used,
But promise never could from me extract ;
Nay, sullen, I grew silent, or refused.

LI

' I dreaded death—ah, woe is me!—and yet
 (Who would believe the fact?) I dared not fly ;
I even feared to show my fear, lest it
 Might thus accelerate the time to die.
In one continuous martyrdom I passed
 A troubled and most miserable life,
Like one expecting that each hour's his last,
 And o'er his neck beholds the impending knife.

LII

' In this condition—was it friendly fate
 Or doom that destined me to end more dire?—
One of the royal officers of state,
 Brought up from childhood by the king my sire,
Disclosed to me the fatal hour was near,
 Fixed by the king to take my life away ;
And that he had promised to administer
 To me the poison on that very day.

LIII

' Adding, it only was by instant flight
 I could prolong my wretched life, and prayed
That, as elsewhere I had no hope of it,
 I would accept his own devoted aid.
The generous offer of this loyal knight
 Gave me such courage, that with him I planned,
Beneath the cover of protecting night,
 To fly my uncle and my native land.

LVII

‘ He said, by bribes I had Arontè won
To mingle deadly poison in his bowl ;
That, when he passed away, I might have none
My will to bridle, or my youth control ;
For that I, following my depraved desires,
Would to my arms a thousand lovers take.
Ah ! on my head may fall Heaven’s blasting fires.
Ere, sacred Chastity, thy laws I break !

LVIII

‘ That greedy hunger for my wealth, and thirst
For innocent blood the monster overcame,
Was bad enough, but that is not the worst :
He wished to sully my immaculate name.
The wretch, who feared the rising of the youth,
So wove and glossed his lies, that in suspense
The city, still uncertain of the truth,
Might not stand up or arm in my defence.

LIX

‘ Nor though he sits upon my throne, nor though
The base usurper wears my royal crown,
Doth he place limit to my sufferings, so
His innate cruelty incites him on.
He’ll burn Arontè’s castle, unless he
Himself, with all in it surrendereth ;
And not with war alone my friends and me
The monster threatens, but with pains and death.

LXIII

‘ Thee whom Heaven destines and permits by fate
To will what’s just, and what thou wilt to do,
Preserve my life, and take thyself the state,
Which if recovered, will become thy due.
For my safe conduct, sire, I only sue
From out thy numerous paladins but ten ;
They will, the elders friends, the people true,
Suffice to place me in my home again.

LXIV

‘ Nay one, the warder of the secret gate,
Has pledged his word, in justice to my right,
To unbar it ; so that we may penetrate
To the king’s quarters in the dusk of night.
Alone he bade me gain thy aid : howe’er
Small, it would more assure him than if came
Whole hosts to his assistance from elsewhere,
So high he ranks thy flag, thy very name.’

LXV

This said, she ceased, awaiting his reply ;
Her manner prayed, her very silence spoke.
In doubt to grant her suit or to deny,
Contending feelings Godfred’s bosom shook :
He feared barbarian wile, and deemed that those
Faithless to God, no faith for man possessed.
On the other hand, within him pity rose,
That never slumbers in magnanimous breast.

LXIX

‘ But this I vow (my word I proffer thee
As knightly pledge, on which securely rest) :
If from their galling yoke we ever free
Those walls to Heaven so precious and so blessed,
Thee to restore, for gentle pity’s sake,
To that lost realm where first thy footsteps trod.
But pity now would me less pious make,
If first I rendered not His due to God.’

LXX

As thus he spake, the maiden drooped her head,
And moveless stood, her eyes upon the ground ;
Then raised them up, suffused with tears, and said
With pleading gesture and lament profound .
‘ Ah wretched, wretched, to whom else did Heaven
A life so hard, so immutable allot,
That others change their bent, their nature even,
Ere changed is my perverse, unhappy lot ?

LXXI

‘ In vain I grieve, and hopeless vainly spend
Prayers to which dead are human breasts ; ah me !
How can I hope the tyrant’s will to bend
By these my sorrows, that are lost on thee ?
Still not of harshness do I thee accuse
Because denying me this trifling aid,
’Tis Heaven I charge, whence all my ill accrues,
’Tis Heaven has thee inexorable made.

LXXV

Her cheeks, besprinkled with those living showers
That from her bosom trickled to her feet,
Appeared like snowy and vermilion flowers,
With the bright pearls of sparkling May-dew wet,
Which, when Aurora first appears, unfold
Their closed-up petals to the jocund air,
And the dawn looking from her throne of gold,
Longs to enwreath their treasures in her hair.

LXXVI

But the clear drops that in such ceaseless flow,
Her lovely cheeks and snowy breast adorn,
Produce the effect of subtle fires that glow
In breasts of thousands, and concealed there, burn.
O miracle ! that Love draws sparks from tears,
And can by water hearts inflame ; alas !
He over nature aye the mastery bears,
But through her beauty doth himself surpass.

LXXVII

This counterfeited grief from many eyes
Draws real tears, and melts the hardest heart ;
Each is affected, and within him cries,
' If aid Prince Godfred doth not now impart,
Surely fierce tigress was his nurse, and he
'Mid Alpine crags of flinty stone was born,
Or 'mid the foaming billows of the sea ;
Cruel ! to let such beauty vainly mourn.'

LXXXI

‘And Heaven forbid it were proclaimed in France,
Or where’er else are valued honour’s laws,
That, false knights, we refused to break a lance
In such a sacred and so just a cause!
I, for my part, cast helm and mail aside,
My stainless sword ungird, for I will ne’er
Unworthily bear arms or steed bestride,
Or more usurp the name of cavalier.’

LXXXII

Thus spake, and all the ranks of chivalry,
Deeming his counsel worthy and most meet,
Shout loud assent, and with concordant cry,
Press round the captain and his grace entreat.
‘I yield,’ he said at length, ‘nor can refuse
Where all with such unanimous voice combine;
Let her obtain this favour, if you choose,
From your opinion, since opposed is mine.

LXXXIII

‘But if ye still to Godfred’s voice give heed,
Temper your transports, nor thus wildly rave.’
Nor uttered more—enough ’twas to concede—
All were contented with the boon he gave.
What cannot thus fair woman’s tears obtain,
What the sweet accents of her siren tongue?
From beauty’s lips proceeds a golden chain
That in its trammels fetters old and young.



LXXXVII

All means the fair enchantress doth embrace
By which to draw new lovers to her snares,
Nor keeps with all or always the same face,
But a changed aspect opportunely wears ;
A close collected look now chastely keeps,
Now darts a wandering and voluptuous glance ;
These, too retiring, with the lash she whips,
And reins back those, too swift in their advance.

LXXXVIII

If she sees any from her love retire,
Their thoughts restraining from timidity,
She unmask her smiles and on them opes the fire
Of her destructive eyes' artillery.
The backward thus with courage she inspires,
Assures the doubtful with fresh marks of cheer,
Inflaming thence their amorous desires,
Her burning glances thaw the frost of fear.

LXXXIX

To others, who o'erstep the boundaries,
By Cupid's blind adventurous guidance led,
Sparing she is of her dear words and eyes,
And frowns them into deference and dread ;
Still through her clouded brow and scornful air
A ray of soft compassionate pity gleams,
Whence, though abashed, they do not quite despair,
And burn the most when she most haughty seems.

XC

At times she leaves the crowd of cavaliers,
Settling her manner and her face to feign
A mournful look, and often draws the tears
Up to her eyes, then drives them back again,
Not fails unnumbered simpletons to move
By these beguiling, these deceitful arts ;
In pity's flame thus tempering shafts of love,
With such strong arms she pierces all their hearts.

XCI

Then as if all such gloomy thoughts had gone,
And fresh new hopes were wakened in her breast,
On her fair forehead joy rekindled shone,
And, turning back, her lovers she addressed,
While, like twin suns, flash forth in full display
Her sunny glance and her celestial smile,
To chase the dark, dense clouds of grief away,
In which their hearts she had involved erewhile.

XCII

But while she sweetly smiles and sweetly speaks,
And doubly thus intoxicates the sense,
To quit its home the ecstatic spirit seeks,
Unused before to rapture so intense.
Ah, cruel tyrant, Love! how equally.
Thy bitter wormwood and sweet honey kill ;
Deadly the ailment and the remedy
With which thou seek'st to cure that cureless ill.

XCIII

Thus by such opposite means, 'twixt ice and fires,
 'Twixt joy and sorrow, between hopes and fears,
The fair deceiver kindles their desires,
 And aye inconstant at their anguish jeers.
If any dare with trembling voice the pains,
 The heart-felt pains that torture him, express,
To be a novice in love's way she feigns,
 Nor at the meaning of his words to guess.

XCIV

Or meekly casting down her eyes from him,
 Colours her cheeks with such shame-conscious grace
As to conceal the rath and snowy rime
 Beneath the roses that now flush her face,
Like those that in the glowing east proclaim
 In earliest, freshest hours Aurora's birth ;
Confounded so, and blent with maiden shame,
 Shot the red flashes of her anger forth.

XCV

If she sees one that by his manner strives
 His burning passion to reveal, she flies ;
Then to console him, means of speaking gives,
 And, with the breath that promises, denies.
Thus tired, and all his expectations crossed,
 In a blind maze she leads him round all day,
And he remains like hunter who has lost
 At eve all traces of his hunted prey.



CANTO V.

I

WHILE to her love the insidious siren lured
The cavaliers, in such seductive guise,
Nor had alone the promised ten secured,
But in addition, to steal others tries ;
Within himself the anxious chief demurs,
To whom the emprise entrust, with her for guide,
Since the great worth of the Adventurers,
And wish of each, much room for choice supplied.

II

But he at length with cautious ken decreed
That freely from their body they should make
Choice of a chief, Dudoné to succeed,
Who the selection on himself might take ;
Thus cause of jealousy he would not sow,
By interfering with their will ; nay, more,
He would his high appreciation show
(Their rightful due) of that illustrious corps.

VI

Thus Godfred spake ; and all consenting, thus
His brother Eustace for the rest replied :
'As caution provident and scrupulous
Becoming is, O captain, on thy side,
So hands to do, no less than hearts to dare,
Is, as our due, required from us : advice,
And well-weighed scruples that in others are
Prevision just, in us were cowardice.

VII

'And since the hazard is so trifling, when
With the advantage in the balance weighed,
With thy permission the selected ten
Will march to the honoured emprise with the maid.'
He thus concluded, and his secret fire
With specious artifice to cover strove
'Neath knightly zeal ; and others feigned desire
For honour, that was but desire of love.

VIII

But younger Buglion, who, with envious eye,
Looked on Rinaldo, fair Sofia's son,
And all his virtues viewed invidiously,
Since in a form so beautiful they shone,
Wished him away ; for subtle jealousy
Inspired most cautious feelings in his heart .
Whence, drawing aside his dangerous rival, he
Addressed him thus with all a flatterer's art :

XII

Here Eustace ceased, nor, as he thus appealed,
Could keep his cheeks from crimsoning the while.
Rinaldo saw his thoughts thus ill concealed
Beneath his blushes, which drew forth a smile ;
But since on him Love's arrows fell more slow,
Nor more than skin deep had incised his breast,
He did not jealous of a rival grow,
Nor cared the maid to follow with the rest.

XIII

Deeply was graved in his tenacious heart
The fate that him of his dear friend deprived.
He deemed it foul dishonour on his part,
That for so long Arganté had survived ;
Still he both heard with pleasure and with pride
The call that would him to such honour raise,
And his young heart was joyed and gratified
By the sweet sounds of that veracious praise.

XIV

Whence he replied : ' Exalted station I
Would rather much more merit than obtain,
Nor envy that, if raised by virtue high,
Others hold lofty posts and rule and reign.
But at the call of honour, if you deem
That place my due, I will not stand aloof ;
Well pleased I should be that ye all esteem
My worthiness by such convincing proof.

XVIII

So that Avernus' evil spirit, who
The opening saw with such advantage fraught,
In silence to his fevered bosom flew,
And deftly seized the rudder of his thought,
And evermore inflamed his rage and hate,
Goading to madness his excited breast,
And caused a voice his soul to penetrate,
Which in these terms the haughty prince addressed :

XIX

' Rinaldo vies with thee : thus much avail
The idle numbers of his ancestry ?
Let him his vassals and allies detail,
Who on a par would place himself with thee ;
His sceptre show, and his dead sires compare
With thy live kings in regal dignity.
Ah ! what a prince of poor estate may dare,
A prince, too, born in servile Italy !

XX

' Henceforth, or vanquished or victorious, he
Was victor when thy rival he became,
Since men (and 'twill his proudest honour be)
Will say, to blows he with Gernando came ;
The post held by Dudoné formerly
Thee with fresh splendour and renown had lit,
And still not less would have received from thee ;
He dimmed its brilliancy in seeking it.

XXIV

And all that is magnanimous and fair,
Generous and high-souled in the illustrious youth,
He censures, as though blemishes they were,
And into shade malignly casts the truth ;
And stormed so, that at length his rival heard
The wide-spread blasts of his malignant breath ;
Yet would not hold his tongue, nor, undeterred,
That frenzy curb, which led him to his death.

XXV

Since the foul fiend that moved his tongue in lieu
Of exiled reason and his thoughts expressed,
Caused him his unjust insults to renew,
And added fuel to his burning breast.
Within the camp was place of great extent,
Where a choice band oft met for martial games,
And there, in wrestling and the tournament,
Increased the skill and vigour of their frames.

XXVI

Now here, what time the crowd was thickest, he
Accused Rinaldo, and upon him flung,
Prompted by hell—as was his destiny—
The envenomed arrows of his spiteful tongue.
Rinaldo near, as thus his slanders rung,
No longer could contain himself, but roared,
' You lie ! ' at once on his traducer sprung,
And quick as thought unsheathed his vengeful sword.

XXVII

Thunder his voice, his steel the flash appeared
Heralding fall of thunderbolt. His fate
Gernando seeing, shook, and from it feared
No means there were himself to extricate.
But all the camp being witness, he put on
An air of bravery and confidence ;
His foe awaiting, and with sabre drawn,
Stood firmly in a posture of defence.

XXVIII

At this burst forth a simultaneous flash,
As from their scabbards myriad falchions flew ;
Since thither numbers of the young and rash,
Hustling and jostling from all quarters drew.
The cries confused of that tumultuous host,
Resounding through the air, resemblance bore
To what is heard upon the wild sea-coast,
When the wind mingles with the billows' roar.

XXIX

But not for menace or entreaty would
The insulted knight repress his fury's fires ;
Heedless of cries and obstacles that could
His progress bar, to vengeance he aspires.
Away he dashes amid men and arms,
Whirling to right and left his thundering sword ;
Thus clears the way, and spite of guardian swarms,
Singly confronts the pale Norwegian lord ;

XXX

And with his hand by rage unmastered still,
Against him feigned and aimed a thousand blows ;
Now chest, now head he sought with wary skill,
The right side now, and now the other chose.
So rapid and impetuous was his hand,
As to deceive all art, and mock the eye ;
Then, where expected least, the flashing brand
Falls, strikes, and penetrates his adversary.

XXXI

Nor pause did ever the avenging sword,
Till it was buried twice through his cuirass ;
The wretched prince sank 'neath the wounds, and poured
His soul and spirit through the double pass.
His steel the victor sheathed, though reeking still,
Nor took more notice of his fallen foe,
But turned elsewhere, and his embittered will
Cast off, now sated by his overthrow.

XXXII

Godfred being meanwhile to the tumult led,
All of a sudden saw the appalling sight :
Gernando fallen, his hair and cloak blood-red,
And his face smitten with death's ghastly blight.
He heard the plaints and lamentations raised,
And saw the tears o'er the slain warrior poured.
'Who has thus dared,' he shouted all amazed,
'Here, where 'twas most forbid, to draw the sword?'

XXXIII

Arnaldo, dearest comrade of the dead,
Tells how (and telling aggravates the case)
Rinaldo slew him, by mad impulse led,
And but from trifling motives, to disgrace
And turn that falchion, in Christ's service worn,
Against a champion of the Cross ; that he
Despised his rule and held in utter scorn
That law of which he could not ignorant be ;

XXXIV

And that by law death was the offender's fate,
Blood needed blood, as it was there laid down ;
Death, since the crime was in itself so great,
Death, since in place so sacred it was done ;
That bad example for the rest 'twould make,
Should grace on such enormities ensue,
And that the injured would that vengeance take
Which was alone from the arm of Justice due ;

XXXV

That thence would quarrels and disunion spread
Between the rival factions of each knight.
He called to mind the merits of the dead
With all that could or wrath or ruth excite.
But Tancred contradicted him and took
Part with the absent slandered cavalier.
Prince Godfred listened, but his rigid look
Less cause for hope afforded than for fear.

XXXVI

Then Tancred added : ' Sire, remember who
And what Rinaldo is, his claims, his worth,
What personal honour to himself is due,
What to his princely and illustrious birth,
What to his uncle Guelph. It is not wise
To the same level punishment to adjust ;
In different ranks the same crime different is :
'Twixt peers alone equality is just.'

XXXVII

The lowliest should,' the pious chief replies,
' Obedience learn from those of high estate.
Ill dost thou argue, Tancred, ill advise
That I forsooth gave licence to the great ;
What were my power if I but swayed the base,
And o'er the mob alone dominion bore ?
My sceptre mockery, my command disgrace :
On such conditions I would rule no more.

XXXVIII

' No, free it was entrusted to my care,
And none shall e'er curtail it or oppose,
And well I know both when I should and where
Different rewards and punishments impose.
And now preserving strict equality,
No difference make 'twixt vassals and their lords.'
Thus spoke Prince Godfred, nor could answer he,
O'ercome with reverence by his Godlike words.

XXXIX

Raymond, in school of antique strictness bred,
His words applauded as both just and wise :
'Who fairly rules with arts like these,' he said,
'Makes himself honoured in his subjects' eyes.
Imperfect is the government of kings
Where man expects not punishment, but grace ;
Empires decay, since clemency but brings
Ruin, that has not wholesome fear for base.'

XL

Thus Raymond spake : his speech Tancredi heard,
Nor longer tarried in their company,
But with hot haste to Prince Rinaldo spurred
His noble charger, which appeared to fly.
Rinaldo had his own pavilion gained,
Soon as in death he had quenched his fierce foe's pride ;
Here Tancred found him, and the sum explained
Of charge and answer made on either side,

XLI

Concluding thus—'Although external signs
I deem no real index of the heart,
Since mortals hide their unavowed designs
In too internal and too deep a part,
Yet from what Godfred's tell-tale looks betrayed,
Which were not silent all, assert I dare,
Thee he would from thy pride of place degrade
The common lot of criminals to share.'

XLII

At that Rinaldo smiled, and with a look

Where through his smiles outflashed disdainful pride,
'Let them in fetters plead their cause who brook
Slaves to remain or helots are,' he cried;
'Free I was born and lived, and free will die,
Ere hand or foot submit to shameful chain;
This hand is used to arms and victory,
And to vile bonds will ne'er submission deign.

XLIII

'But should Prince Godfred render this reward
To my deserts, or dare imprison me
And drag me hence with ignominious cord,
To ignoble jail as one of low degree,
Let him or come or send, I will not budge;
And will be seen a bloody tragedy
(As arms and fate our differences judge),
Choice entertainment for the enemy.

XLIV

'Bring me my arms!' this said, he loudly cried,
And in steel suit got ready for the field,
The fatal sword suspended from his side,
And his arm loaded with the massy shield.
Most chivalrous and princely was his mien
As he in armour shone like flashing leven,
Resembling thee, horrific Mars, when seen
Descending down from the fifth cirque of heaven.

CANTO V. JERUSALEM

XL

Meanwhile Tancredi tried to
His haughty heart, and fie
'Unconquered boy,' he said, '
The roughest task I know
Thy gallantry is most secure
Amid the terrors of the bl
But Heaven forbid thou sho
By injuring us so cruelly t

XL'

'What wouldst thou? say, wo
In brother's blood and sui
Wouldst thou the breasts of C
The Christ himself, of wh
Can vain regard for fleeting
Which comes and goes lik
More influence have than ze
For glory which is deathle

XLV

'For God's sake, no! o'erco
Thy headstrong spirit, and
Yield not from fear, but from
And glorious palms will th
And if thou'lt deign example
(From what occurred in ine
Know, though the Faithful o
I shunned all quarrel, and

XLVIII

‘ For having gained Cilicia’s realm, and there
The glorious banner of the Cross displayed,
Later came Baldwin, who, by means unfair,
Despoiled me of the conquest I had made.
His wily face such friendly purpose wore,
As to conceal his thoughts and avarice hide ;
Yet I to get it back by force forbore,
Although success were certain, had I tried.

XLIX

‘ But if confinement thy haught soul refuse,
And fetters spurn as ignominious weight,
And those observances to follow choose,
Which men, as laws of honour, advocate ;
Leave me to excuse thee to the captain here,
And thou to Boëmond, at Antioch, fly.
Since I scarce deem it safe for thee to bear
The first outburst of his severity.

L

‘ But rest assured, should ’gainst our arms combine
The Egyptian hordes, or other Pagan band,
That still more brightly will thy valour shine,
Thee absent, wandering in a foreign land.
Without Rinaldo will the camp appear
Maimed, like a trunk bereft of arm or hand.’
Here Guelph arrived, and urged the cavalier
To leave at once, nor their joint prayers withstand.

LI

The fiery youth's exasperated heart
 Yields to their judgment, to their counsel bends ;
 He now no more refuses to depart
 From the Frank army and his faithful friends.
 Meanwhile his comrades had around him flown,
 And with him begged permission to proceed ;
 He thanked them all, but took with him alone
 Two trusty squires, and vaulted on his steed.

LII

Away he rides, inspired by love of fame,
 That powerful stimulant to noble breast :
 On glorious deeds his soul had fixed its aim,
 Which did a thousand rare exploits suggest :
 'Mid hostile tribes to go, and gather there
 Cypress or palm, in honour of his God ;
 Scour Egypt's plains, and penetrate to where
 From their dark source Nile's mystic waters flowed.

LIII

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But Guelpho, soon as the hot-headed knight,
 Thus pressed to go, had taken leave, behind
 No longer stayed, but bent his rapid flight
 To where he expected the camp's chief to find.
 Who, when he saw him, raised his voice and cried :
 ' Guelph ! thou art the one I most desired to see,
 And have this moment sent on every side
 Our fleetest heralds to make search for thee.'

LIV

Then having caused the others to recede,
In voice subdued began this grave discourse :
' Truly thy nephew doth all bounds exceed
When o'er his spirit rage exerts its force :
He scarce can bring, O Guelph, in my belief,
For deed so heinous justifying cause,
Though could he do so, it were great relief ;
But all ranks Godfred rules with equal laws,

LV

' And will the guardian and defender be
In every case of what is just and right,
Keeping his heart for equal judgment free
From tyrant passions that o'errule it might.
Now if Rinaldo was, as some pretend,
Constrained to violate our well-known laws
And discipline's stern rules, then let him bend
To our tribunal, and make good his cause.

LVI

' Let him come freely, nor this grace abuse,
Which to his worth I am content to show ;
But should he prove rebellious and refuse—
For well his fiery temperament I know—
Be it thine to bring, and see the cavalier
Forces not one most merciful, to be
Avenger, when by duty forced, severe
Of outraged justice and authority.'

LVII

Thus spake Prince Godfred, and thus Guelph replied :

‘The soul that shrinks from infamy could not
Hear words so false and wounding to its pride,
And not revenge the insult on the spot.
If the bold youth the foul-mouthed slanderer slew,
Who can set bounds to justifiable ire?
Who count the blows and weigh the sentence due,
When burns the contest and the soul’s on fire?

LVIII

‘But what thou askest, that the cavalier
Should to thy sovran judgment bow his head,
It grieves me, cannot be ; since far from here
In dudgeon hath the froward stripling fled.
But I will prove, in absence of the youth,
Should any bring false charge behind his back,
Or wound his honour with malignant tooth,
He justly punished an unjust attack.

LIX

‘Rightly from that vain vapourer, I say,
He shore the horns of his presumptuous pride ;
But wrong he was thy ban to disobey :
In that alone he was not justified.’
He ceased, and Godfred said : ‘Well, let him go
And brawl elsewhere, but here we must have peace ;
Nor must thou seed of farther quarrels sow :
For God’s sake, now, let all dissensions cease !’

LX

Meanwhile the guilty traitress never ceased
For the assistance promised her to sue ;
All day she entreated, and in practice placed
All that her beauty, wit, or art could do.
But when, extending her dusk livery,
Night in the west had curtained day from view,
Between two matrons and two esquires she
To her pavilion secretly withdrew.

LXI

But although mistress of deceit, and though
Of winning manners and refined address,
And though so fair that Heaven did ne'er bestow
On mortal such exceeding loveliness,
So that the army's most illustrious knights
She held by tie most strong and most secure ;
Still, all her lures inviting to delights
Unable were the pious chief to lure.

LXII

Vainly she tried his rigid heart to bend
To life of love by suicidal sweets ;
For, as a bird when cloyed will not descend
To where the fowler offering food entreats ;
World-sated, so, its pleasures frail the knight
Spurned, as by lonely path to heaven he toiled,
And all the snares that 'gainst his upward flight
False Cupid set, his saint-like virtue foiled.

LXVI

Although lamenting that complete success
Had not attended her designs and art,
Still, as she did such noble spoil possess
Of famous heroes, she's consoled in part,
And plans, ere knowledge of her frauds they gain,
Them to transport to safer regions, where
She may secure them with another chain
Than those soft silken ones that now they wear.

LXVII

And as the period which the captain had
Fixed to assist her had arrived at last,
To him she reverently came and said :
' The appointed day, sire, is already past,
And if the guilty tyrant heard by chance
I to thy arms had flown for succour, he
Would straight prepare his forces for defence,
Nor then so easy would the emprise be.

LXVIII

' Then, ere he heareth such important news
From Fame's uncertain voice or certain spies,
From out thy bravest, let thy pity choose
Some few to aid me in this enterprise ;
Since if just Heaven forget not innocence,
Nor with distorted eye man's actions see,
I shall regain my kingdom, which will thence
In peace and war thy tributary be.'

LXIX

Thus argued she. Unable to recede,
The captain gave assent to her request,
Although, she being impatient to proceed,
He saw the election with himself must rest.
Each with unwonted instance urged his claim
To be admitted of the chosen band,
Whence the emulation that this roused in them
Made all importunate in their demand.

LXX

She, who thus saw their inmost hearts exposed,
With them adopts another instrument,
And artfully the wretched sting imposed
Of jealousy, to scourge them and torment,
Knowing full well without such spur that love
Grows old and sluggish. So the crafty steed
With easy paces only deigns to move
If there be none that follow or precede.

LXXI

Her subtle words she apportions in such guise,
To this a smile, to that a flattering leer,
That each the other views with envious eyes,
And hope ne'er dawns but chilled by jealous fear.
The frantic crowds of her admirers, who
By tricks of her deceitful face are ta'en,
O'erleap all bounds, all sense of shame eschew,
And even Godfred reprimands in vain.

LXXII

He, who to satisfy them all desired,
Nor leaned to one more than another, though
Somewhat by shame and indignation fired,
To see his dukes such doting folly show ;
Still, as they would not from their loadstar turn,
He to accord them fresh advice supplied :
' Write down your names and place them in an urn,
And let Chance judge, and this your case decide.'

LXXIII

At once each cavalier inscribed his name,
Which in the urn was placed and shaken o'er,
Then drawn by lot : when lo ! the first that came
Was Pembroke's noble earl, Artemidore.
Succeeding his, Gherardo's name was read ;
Then Vincilao's came to his great joy,
He, who was erst so prudent and so staid,
Now, hoary lover, plays the love-sick boy.

LXXIV

Oh ! what delight these three first chosen show,
Their eyes how teeming with that ecstasy
Which from the full full heart doth overflow,
To find love favoured thus by Destiny.
The rest feel jealousy's heart-scalding pang,
Whose names the tantalising urn conceals,
And on his lips in mute attention hang,
Who the scroll opens and the name reveals.

LXXVIII

The sage minutely warns them ere they part
How false is Pagan honour and how light,
Their word how insecure, and with what art
Man should their snares and hostile purpose slight.
But scattered to the wind his precepts were,
For when did Love learn wisdom from the wise?
Them he dismissed at length, nor would the fair
Postpone her going even till sunrise.

LXXIX

The conqueror goes, and with her leads along
The rival knights in her triumphant train,
And of her other lovers leaves the throng
To evils infinite. But when again
Dark night came forth and 'neath her wings brought back
Silence profound and errant dreams renewed,
Many, as Love disposes them, the track
Of fair Armida furtively pursued.

LXXX

First Eustace followed her; he scarcely stayed
E'en for the shroud of shadow-bearing night.
Through the thick gloom his way he quickly made,
A blind guide leading him in his blind flight;
All night he wandered in the genial air,
But when the sun's life-giving radiance rose,
He spied Armida and her escort where
A burgh last night afforded them repose.

LXXXI

Swiftly he flew to her : him by his crest

At once Rambaldo recognised, and cried :

‘ Why comest here ? of what art thou in quest ? ’

‘ I come to join Armida,’ he replied,

‘ Nor is there who will trustier service pay,

If she disdain me not nor disapprove.’

Rambaldo then : ‘ And to such honour, say,

Who has elected you ? ’ He answered : ‘ Love !

LXXXII

‘ Me Love elected, random Fortune thee :

Which is more fitting arbiter to choose ? ’

Rambaldo said : ‘ Thou dost but prove to me

Thy title false, and useless tactics use ;

Nor with the lawful champions of the maid

Canst thou presume to mix, unlawful knight.’

Provoked at this, the impetuous stripling said :

‘ And who’ll prevent me or deny my right ? ’

LXXXIII

‘ I will,’ Rambaldo fearlessly replied,

And dashed against his rival at the word.

No less impatience Eustace testified,

And with like eagerness unsheathed his sword.

But their soul’s tyrant rushed between the two

With outstretched hand their anger to restrain ;

To one, ‘ Ah grieve not,’ she exclaimed, ‘ that you

Another comrade, I a champion gain.

LXXXIV

‘If you desire my safety, why deprive
Me of fresh succour in this urgent strait?’
To Eustace : ‘Opportunely you arrive
To guard my honour and avert my fate.
Unreasonable ’twere that I prevent
Such friends from coming, or their aid disclaim.’
As thus she spoke and on her journey went,
From various quarters various champions came.

LXXXV

From here, from there, unknown to each they came,
Each sourly scowling at the other. She
Welcomed them all, and showed to all the same
Delight once more her gallant friends to see ;
But when the dawn had night’s dark shadows cleared,
Godfred at once of their departure knew ;
His mind, prophetic of misfortune, feared
The untold evils that might thence ensue.

LXXXVI

Him, as he mused, a herald stood before,
Travel-stained, breathless, and of mournful mien,
Resembling one that bitter tidings bore,
On whose sad forehead the sad news was seen.
‘O prince,’ he said, ‘soon, soon upon these seas
Egypt’s immense armada will appear !
From William, who commands the Genoese
Fleet, this intelligence to thee I bear.’

LXXXVII

He added, ' that a convoy from the fleet,
While stores escorting for the camp's supplies
With camels and well-laden horse, did meet,
Midway from thence, a terrible surprise,
The guards being slain or prisoners made ; that not
'Scaped of their force a single cavalier,
Arabian robbers, in a lonely spot,
Having attacked them in the front and rear.

LXXXVIII

' And that the license and unbridled force
Of these barbarians has become so great,
That like a torrent which o'erleaps its course
And finds no check, they gather and dilate.
Whence, to strike terror in those lawless bands,
'Twere well some squadrons from the host to send,
And so secure the roads that from the sands
Of Syria's seabord to the camp extend.'

LXXXIX

From tongue to tongue alarming rumours fly,
And in a moment through the army spread.
The thoughts of famine that appears so nigh
The vulgar fill with overwhelming dread.
The observant chief, who with profound dismay
How drooped their wonted confidence had seen,
Sought to console and chase their fears away
By hopeful words and reassuring mien.

XC

'Ye, who such countless perils have passed o'er
In various distant latitudes with me ;
Champions of Christ ! created to restore
The many losses of Christianity ;
Who Persia's arms and Greece's snares of yore,
Seas, storms, cold, mountain passes overcame ;
Who the dire pangs of thirst and hunger bore ;
What ! are you frightened now?—for shame ! for shame !

XCI

'What ! doth not God, who leads you with such care,
As in severer trials has been proved,
Assure your spirits ? or hath He elsewhere
His clement arm and countenance removed ?
Soon your past toils ye will with joy recall,
When at His shrine your promised vows ye pay ;
Meanwhile bear up with courage, and let all
Reserve themselves for that triumphant day.'

XCII

By such like words, and by his looks serene,
He cheered their 'wildered spirits, and repressed
A thousand sick and carking cares within
The deep recesses of his anxious breast :
How best such various nations to maintain
'Mid loss and scarcity ; how Egypt's fleet
Oppose successfully upon the main,
And how the Arab plunderers defeat.



CANTO VI. *6 a¹*

I

BUT brighter hopes console and reassure
The drooping hearts of the beleaguered side ;
Since, besides all their stores, at night's obscure
They were with other aliments supplied.
Northwards they had with engines fortified,
And war's most formidable arms, the walls :
Which thus increased in height and strength, defied
The shock of rams and strokes of flying balls.

II

Nor ceased the king to make them still upraise
The walls around and outworks fortify ;
Or by the golden sun's effulgent rays,
Or when the moon and stars lit up the sky.
Forging new arms no rest the armourer knows,
For ever sweating with incessant stroke.
But while preparing, scornful of repose,
Arganté sought the monarch, and thus spoke :

III

‘ And pray, how long, cooped up in jail like this,
Must we endure a slow disgraceful siege ?
I hear indeed the glowing anvils hiss,
And ring of corslet, casque, and shield, my liege,
But see not to what use. These robbers prance
At their free will through all the burghs and plains ;
Nor is there one dare check their bold advance,
Or break their slumbers with the clarion’s strains.

IV

‘ Ne’er interrupted by unseemly fights
Are their gay suppers or rich banquets ; nay,
Unbroken days and unmolested nights
They pass in calm security away.
But you by famine overcome, I fear,
In the long run will fall an easy prey,
Or like base cowards rot ignobly here,
Should Egypt more her promised aid delay.

V

‘ I, for my part, will not ignoble doom
My glory shroud ; nor me another day
Within these gates, as in a living tomb,
The lustre of another sun survey ;
With this my life let Destiny do all
That is already ’stablished in the sky,
But unrevenged at least I will not fall,
Nor without drawing the sword, dishonoured, die.

VI

‘ But were all sparks of your accustomed might
Extinguished not within your hearts, I see
Not death in open, honourable fight,
But certain hope of life and victory.
Firm and resolved then ’gainst these plunderers,
And against Fate itself, let us contest,
Since oft in greatest danger it occurs
That most audacious counsels are the best.

VII

‘ But deem’st thou ’twere too great temerity
In one grand sortie to lead forth thy spears ;
Arrange at least that this thy quarrel be
Defined and settled by two cavaliers.
And that the Christian captain may receive
More willingly our challenge, to that knight
Let us the choice of ground and weapons leave,
Let him the terms determine of the fight.

VIII

‘ Then did two hands alone ’gainst me appear,
And but one soul, however bold and strong,
By no mischance whatever need’st thou fear,
That at my hands thy cause would suffer wrong.
In place of fickle Fate and Destiny,
Trust for thy triumphs to this hand alone :
Take it in pledge of certain victory ;
In it confide, and saved’s thy life and throne.’

III

‘Intrepid youth,’ replied the king, ‘although
In me the marks of hoary age you trace,
To draw the sword this arm is not so slow,
Nor is this soul so slothful and so base
That I prefer to rot ignobly here
To dying nobly on the open field,
Had I a doubt or e’en the slightest fear
Of the distress and want thou hast revealed.

X

‘May God avert such infamy ! But now
I’ll tell thee what from others I conceal :
Nicæan Solyman, who burneth how
To avenge his losses, has, with noble zeal,
Contrived from Afric’s deserts to unite
The scattered ranks of many a nomad horde,
And trusts, the foe attacking in the night,
Supplies of food, and succour to afford.

XI

‘Soon it may be he come ; and if meanwhile
Our castles round are captured and o’erthrown,
Let us not care, if from the foe I still
Preserve my royal sceptre and my throne ;
But for God’s sake that fervent spirit prune,
Which in thy bosom burneth to excess,
And wait, O prince, a season opportune
To increase thy glory and my wrongs redress.’

XII

This nettled sorely the bold cavalier,
Who was the soldan's rival, and as such
Was most profoundly mortified to hear
That on his aid the king relied so much.
'Peace, sire, and war on thy sole will depend,'
Arganté said; 'that's thy affair alone.
Wait then; the mighty Solyman attend,
And let him save thy realm who lost his own.

XIII

'Let him, celestial messenger, descend,
And to the Pagans liberty afford;
I, for my part, upon myself depend,
And trust for freedom solely from my sword.
Grant then that I, while others shun the fight
In slothful ease, to yon arena go,
Not as thy champion, but as simple knight,
And singly there do battle with the foe.'

XIV

'Although for worthier object,' answered he,
'Thou shouldst reserve thy wrath and sword, still I
Refuse thee not, if such thy pleasure be,
The foe to single combat to defy.'
He ceased. Arganté not a moment lost,
But to a herald: 'To the camp repair,
And to their chief, in hearing of the host,
This my not unimportant challenge bear:

XV

‘ Say that a knight who holds it in disdain
To crouch ’mid ramparts, and in trenches lie,
Will in the open field with arms maintain,
Should any dare the facts he states deny,
That ’tis not zeal for faith the Frank inspires,
Or honest end they seek in this campaign,
But only ambitious, covetous desires,
The thirst of rapine and the lust to reign.

XVI

‘ And that he is not only against one
Or two of yonder camp in arms arrayed,
But proudly dares a third, fourth, fifth, come on,
Be they of gentle or plebeian grade.
Let him accord safe conduct if he will,
And let the vanquished with the victor rest.’
Arganté thus his orders gave. Meanwhile,
The herald in his purple tabard dressed.

XVII

Soon as he did the royal presence reach
Of pious Godfred and his barons bold,
He asked : ‘ Do ye grant liberty of speech
To me, a herald ?’ ‘ Ay, at once unfold,’
Replied the chief, ‘ without the slightest fear
Thy proposition, whatsoe’er it be.’
Rejoined the herald, ‘ It will then appear
If sweet or bitter prove my embassy.’

XVIII

He gave them then the challenge, and assumed
A tone so haught, and used such lofty words,
That at his language the fierce barons fumed,
And clapped their angry hands upon their swords.
The pious Godfred, without waiting, said,
'Your champion undertakes a hard emprise:
I fain would think he may repent, nor need
A fifth his bold presumption to chastise ;

XIX

'But let him bide the proof ; I grant your knight
Safe conduct here—an open field and fair ;
With him shall one of our Crusaders fight,
Nor vantage take—this solemnly I swear.'
He ceased. The king at arms returned again
By the same pathway he had trod before ;
Nor did the swiftness of his steps restrain
Till he the answer to Arganté bore. ♀

XX

'Arm, arm, my lord,' he cried, 'nor use delay,
Thy challenge is accepted : not alone
The sovran knights are burning for the fray,
But even those less noble and less known.
I saw, while there, a thousand lowering brows ;
Grasping the sword I saw a thousand hands ;
A field secure the Christian chief allows.'
This said, his arms the fiery Turk demands.

XXI

And girt them round him, in his haste to tread
 (Intolerant of sloth) the listed plain.
To bold Clorinda then the monarch said,
 ' Unjust it were he go while you remain,
Take then a thousand spears to escort the knight,
 And guard his safety 'gainst unfair assault,
But let him go alone, in equal fight ;
 You at some distance off your party halt.'

XXII

This said, he ceased ; and they, when armèd, bore
 Down from the rampired city to the plain,
And fierce Arganté galloped on before,
 Sheathed in his wonted panoply of chain.
'Twixt Pagan wall and Christian palisade,
 A level spot there was of ample size ;
Ample and smooth, it seemed on purpose made
 As tilting ground for knights to exercise.

XXIII

There singly he descended ; there, in sight
 Of the assembled Franks, his station took,
Proud of his frame, his courage, and his might,
 With threatening, insolent, imperious look.
In Phlegra thus Enceladus appeared ;
 Thus in the vale the giant Philistine :
But still not many thee, Arganté, feared,
 As yet they had not felt that arm of thine.

XXIV

Though pious Godfred had not yet selected
The one he deemed among so many best ;
All eyes towards Prince Tancredi were directed,
And upon him with deep affection rest.
All in esteeming him the best concurred,
Their every look a common choice implied.
Approval then in words more plain was heard,
Which with a nod the captain ratified.

XXV

To him already had the rest given way,
Nor longer did the pious chief defer ;
But said, ' Tancredi, thou hast my leave : away,
And curb the fury of yon blusterer.'
Appointed champion for the encounter, pride
Upon his flushed exultant features glowed.
' Bring me my helm and destrier,' he cried,
And flanked by thousands from the entrenchments rode.

XXVI

He had not reached the broad arena where
Arganté waited, when in warlike guise,
And in appearance no less strange than fair,
Clorinda loomed before his startled eyes.
Her surcoat looked a thousand times more white
Than sparkling snowdrift in some alpine glade ;
She wore her vizor up, and from the height
The full proportion of her form displayed.

XXVII

Nor saw Tancredi where Arganté still
Raised his portentous forehead to the skies,
But moved his destrier slowly towards the hill,
Fixing on her his rapt enamoured eyes,
Then rooted stood, as if transformed to stone.
Outside, all ice, but lava at the core,
Sight he possessed not, save for her alone,
Nor seemed to think of the encounter more.

XXVIII

Arganté, who beheld no cavalier
Give sign of preparation for the fight,
Shouted : ' Desire of conflict led me here :
Who jousts with me or dares contend in might ?'
Tancredi still was gazing on the maid
Like one entranced, nor seemed his words to hear,
When forward Otho spurred his fiery steed,
And was the first the vacant lists to clear.

XXIX

One of those Franks he was whose proudest aim
Was to do battle with the Pagan knight ;
But to Tancredi had resigned his claim,
And followed him on horseback to the fight.
Now, seeing his feelings all absorbed elsewhere,
And that the combat he appeared to shun,
The impetuous stripling could no more forbear,
But seized the occasion, and dashed boldly on.

XXX

Not half so swift the tiger or fierce pard
Scours through the forest, as Prince Otho pressed
To strike the Saracen, who, on his guard,
Had to receive him placed his lance in rest.
This roused Tancredi, who till now supine,
Engrossed—abstracted, woke as from a trance,
Exclaiming loudly : ‘ Stay, the combat’s mine !’
But all too far was Otho in advance.

XXXI

Whence halted he, live coals appeared his face,
And his proud heart with ire and shame to burst,
Deeming it vile defection and disgrace
That in the encounter he was not the first.
Meanwhile, the youth had struck in mid career
Arganté’s helm, when spurring to the charge.
He, with a counter-stroke of his sharp spear,
Clove through his hauberk, having pierced his targe.

XXXII

The Christian fell. Tremendous was the shock
That sent him flying from the saddle bow.
But the huge Pagan, like some firm-set rock,
Fell not, nor even reeled beneath the blow,
Deriding him despitefully who lay
Prone at his feet : ‘ Yield, slave, and let it be
Sufficient for thy future fame to say
That you did once, rash boy, contend with me.’

XXXIII

‘No,’ replied Otho, ‘let what will befall,
Never yield up my arms or trust will I;
Let others make excuses for my fall,
I will avenge it, or I here will die.’
At this with ire Arganté grew inflamed,
The sister Furies sparkled in his eyes;
‘Learn then by proof my valour,’ he exclaimed,
‘Since thus my courteous offer you despise.’

XXXIV

Arganté spurred his destrier as he spoke,
Forgetting laws of chivalry. Aside
Prince Otho sprang, evading him, and struck
The brawny Turk, when passing, in the side.
So heavy, so impetuous was the stroke,
That the steel issued bathed in crimson gore:
But to what good, if it fresh fury woke,
And left the victor puissant as before?

XXXV

His steed Arganté curbed, and turned him back;
But with such lightning speed, that ere his foe
Could guard himself against the fresh attack,
He by the great collision was laid low.
Trembled his limbs, faint, short his breath became,
His features paled, his languid eyes swam round;
Tremendous was the shock, with which his frame,
Faint and exhausted, struck the unyielding ground.

XXXVI

Enfelled in his ire, Arganté made
His destrier trample on his breast: 'Tis meet
That thus the insolent are served,' he said,
'Like him who now lies prostrate at my feet.'
But generous Tancred could refrain no more,
And shocked at that unmerciful assault,
Resolved his valour, as it shone before,
Should shine and make atonement for his fault.

XXXVII

Forward he dashed, exclaiming : 'Soul abject,
That in your victories ev'n are infamous,
What title to renown do you expect
From act so bloody and so barbarous?
Your nature best with Arab ruffians suits,
And other savages of like degree;
Go, daylight shun, and with your fellow brutes
In wastes and wilds indulge your cruelty.'

XXXVIII

The Pagan, little to endurance used,
Bit both his lips, consumed with rage and gall,
And tried to speak, but only sounds confused
Escaped, like cry of some wild animal;
And as from cloud, in which it was immured,
Thunder bursts forth and passes, so expressed
Was the gruff growl of each half muttered word
That rumbled forth from his infuriate breast.

XXXIX

But when rude menace and insulting speech
Their pride had whetted and their anger steeled,
With like rapidity and vigour, each
Ground taking for a charge, his charger wheeled.
But here, O muse, refresh my voice ; inspire
Me with like force to theirs, that through thy charms
My song may not unworthily aspire,
But nobly echo back the clash of arms.

XL

In rest each warrior placed his knotty spear,
Its point directing upwards. Ne'er did spring
Of couchant tiger, nor the bound of deer,
Nor swoop of eagle on its swiftest wing,
Equal the speed with which Tancredi here,
And there Arganté, dashed to the assault ;
Their lances shivered when in mid career,
Whence sparks and splinters flew to heaven's blue vault.

XLI

Shook the firm earth, the distant hills resounded,
From the loud thunder of their crashing blows,
Whose force and desperate impetus rebounded
* Lightly from off their haught, unblenching brows ;
So charged their steeds, cheered by their rider's tongue,
That falling down they could not rise up ; whence
The accomplished soldiers from their saddles sprung,
Unsheathed their swords, and stood upon defence.

XLII

To the other's look each warily moves his eye,
To blow his hand, to change of foot his feet.
Positions new, new guards, new feints they try;
Wheel back, press forward, and at times retreat.
Here feign a stroke and strike not, but elsewhere
Down falls the sword on some unmenaced part;
Now leave some point unguarded, as a snare
To lure the foe, art trying to baffle art.

XLIII

Protected ill by scimeter or targe,
Tancredi showed the Saracen his flank.
In rushed the Pagan, leaving in his charge,
His own left side uncovered; the quick Frank
Not only parried by a dexterous blow
The ruthless weapon, but retorted hard;
Nor, this accomplished, to retire was slow,
But backwards sprung and placed himself on guard.

XLIV

But when the fierce Circassian knight beheld
His own wet blood his glittering armour stain,
Struck with unwonted horror he outyelled,
By shame distracted and half mad from pain ;
Nor his infuriate impulse could restrain,
But with raised voice and sword, turned round to hit
The Christian knight, and wounded was again
Just where the arm is to the shoulder knit.

XLV

As in some alpine wood a savage bear,
Who feels an arrow rankling in her side,
Infuriate, springs upon the hunter's spear,
At perils and at death unterrified ;
Such the impetuous Saracen became
As wound on wound and shame on shame augments ;
While hopes for vengeance so his soul inflame,
He scorns all dangers and forgets defence.

XLVI

To reckless courage joining force immense,
And to untiring vigour rage unslaked,
His sword he brandished with such violence
That the heavens lightened and the mountains quaked.
Nor had himself Tancredi time to shield
Or scarcely breathe—much less to strike a blow,
Or shelter find that might protection yield
'Gainst the hot haste and fury of his foe.

XLVII

Collected in himself he waits in vain
Till the fierce tempest of his strokes subsides,
He parries now, now swiftly o'er the plain
In skilful circles to avoid him glides ;
But since unceasing is the Pagan lord,
At length his passions carry him away ;
Lashed into fury, he too whirls his sword
And doth the same mad violence display.

XLVIII

Judgment and skill by rage are overborne,
As frenzy fires and doth their force sustain.
Ne'er falls the sword but cloven through or torn
Is mail or corslet, steel ne'er strikes in vain ;
Strown is the ground with arms, the arms with gore,
The gore with sweat : in that infuriate war
Lightning in flash, loud thunder in the roar,
Bolts in descent, their gleaming broad swords are.

XLIX

In deep suspense the rival armies hung
On that most novel and appalling sight.
Now buoyed by hope, now by misgiving wrung,
They watched the changes of that desperate fight ;
No sign was made, nor did the tongue express
The deep anxiety on either part,
But silent all remained and motionless :
The only motion was the beating heart.

L

Both were exhausted now, and perhaps the foes
Had to untimely end, still battling, come,
But that so black the shades of night uprose
That things ev'n near were hidden in their gloom.
At this from either side a herald sought
To part them, which at length they did: the one
Aridos, the other Pindoro, who brought
The challenge, deemed a wise and prudent man.

LI

They dared their peaceful sceptres interpose
Between the combatants' infuriate swords
With that security, which ev'n 'mid foes
The law of nations to their class affords.
' Brave soldiers, ye,' 'twas thus the latter spake,
' Have gained like fame and are of equal might ;
Cease then the combat, nor unnatural, break
The calm repose and purpose of the night.

LII

' The time for travail is while shines the sun,
But all creation hath repose at night,
Nor do the noble value actions done
In the dark, dumb obscurity of night.'
Arganté answered him : ' To quit the fray
Ill-pleased I am, even for these shades obscure ;
I should prefer the evidence of day,
But will this Christian his return insure ?'

LIII

' Wilt thou, too, promise,' Prince Tancredi cried,
' Here to return and bring thy prisoner back ?
As otherwise I can't consent to bide
Another season to conclude the attack.'
Both swore ; the heralds, who selected were
To appoint the time the contest to renew
(To give them time their forces to repair),
Fixed the sixth morning, and at once withdrew.

LIV

The frightful combat left profoundly impressed
A sense of consternation and surprise
In every Christian, every Pagan breast ;
It seemed to haunt their horror-stricken eyes :
Of nought was spoken, save the nerve and might
That in it either combatant displayed ;
But to whom give the honours of the fight,
Was a moot subject of opinion made ;

LV

Uncertain what succession would entail
The bloody horrors of that hard-fought field,
If fury would o'er chivalry prevail,
Or recklessness to real courage yield.
But more than all who apprehensive are,
Painful suspense the fair Erminia rends,
Since on the issue of uncertain war
A life far dearer than her own depends.

LVI

She was the daughter of Cassano, who
Dominion held o'er Antioch of yore,
And when it fell before the Frank, she too,
With other spoil, fell into Tancred's power ;
But he behaved with such fine courtesy,
That at his hands no wrong she suffered : e'en
Amid the ruin of her country, she
Was honoured as though still she were its queen.

LVII

That chivalrous and noble cavalier
Gave her her freedom, honoured her, obeyed,
Leaving, with all that she esteemed most dear,
Her wealth and jewels to the royal maid ;
Who, in his youthful person having found
A princely soul combined with beauty rare,
Fell deep in love ; who firmer knot ne'er bound
Than that with which he now encircled her.

LVIII

Thus still in slavery her soul remained,
Though to her body freedom was restored,
And deeply was the enamoured princess pained
To leave her prison and her darling lord ;
But sovran modesty, which never should
Neglected be by proud magnanimous dame,
Forced her departure from the neighbourhood,
Whence with her mother she to Salem came,

LIX

A friendly country, and was there received
By the fell tyrant of the Hebrew state,
But soon of her dear mother was bereaved,
And mourned in orphan weeds her hapless fate.
Still grief, though rankling 'neath Death's keenest dart,
Could not, nor ev'n could banishment, remove
The amorous longings of her stricken heart,
Or quench the flame of her deep-rooted love.

LX

She loved, she burned in secret, and became
So sad and hopeless—wretched girl—that she
Within her bosom fed the hidden flame,
Far less of hope, alas ! than memory.
Since the more stifled, all the greater strength
Her burning thoughts and smouldering fire possessed.
To Salem's walls Tancredi came at length,
And woke fresh hopes in her despondent breast.

LXI

The others, panic-struck beheld with awe
Those fierce, unconquered legions burst in sight ;
But she cleared up her clouded brow and saw
The haughty troops with ill-repressed delight,
And many fond inquiring glances threw
To try the dear one 'mid that host to see ;
Oft sought in vain, oft recognised him too,
Exclaiming eagerly, ' That—that is he ! '

LXII

In the imperial palace, near the wall,
An ancient tower o'erlooks the wide champaign,
From whose high top one can distinguish all
The Christian camp, the mountain and the plain.
There from the dawn's first blushes, until damp
And gloomy night obscured the world, her eyes
Moveless she fixed upon the Christian camp,
Her thoughts communed with and outpoured her sighs ;

LXIII

Thence saw the fight, and was so deeply moved
As she its changes watched with bated breath,
That her heart seemed to whisper : ' Thy beloved
Is he that stands there in the risk of death.'
Thus full of doubt and dread for her adored,
She did each turn of the encounter feel ;
Each time the Pagan raised his cruel sword,
Within her soul she felt the griding steel.

LXIV

But when she heard the truth, and also heard
That to the sword they must again appeal,
By such strange terror was her bosom stirred,
That into ice she felt her blood congeal.
Now tears in secret the sad maiden shed,
Now sobs ill-stifled told her heart-felt care :
Pale, woebegone, from fright and grief half dead,
She looked the incarnation of despair.

LXV

With dreadful images her fancy teems,
Which her repose disquiet and affright ;
Sleep is far worse than death, since in her dreams
Such monstrous visions it presents : her knight,
Her darling knight, she pictures in her mind,
Mangled and bloody ; his faint voice she hears
Her aid imploring ; when she wakes to find
Her eyes and bosom bathed in real tears.

LXVI

Nor was it alone of future ills the dread
That with such painful movement stirred her breast ;
But grief for wounds that he already had,
Prevents her soul obtaining any rest.
And the false rumours that around are rife
The distant unknown facts so magnify,
That on the very verge of failing life
She sees the sick and languid warrior lie.

LXVII

And since her mother had to her revealed
The secret virtue that each herb contains,
And by what potent charms all hurts are healed
In wounded members, and assuaged their pains
(An art which from old custom in that land,
It seems king's daughters jealously preserve) ;
She wished to cure his wounds with her own hand,
And to restore the dear one's strength and nerve.

LXVIII

To cure her dear Tancredi she desired,
And yet was fated to relieve his foe ;
And for a moment her dark thoughts conspired
With noxious herbs to poison him ; but no !
Her virgin hands recoiled from all foul arts,
And she abstained such treacherous means to use,
But wished at least within her heart of hearts,
For him her simples might their virtue lose.

Reflect now I, when thou wert captive made,
Thy mind and limbs in chastity preserved ;
And wilt thou, free, with maiden honour part,
So closely guarded in captivity ?
Ah, who has roused such feelings in thy heart ?
What thoughts mislead, what hopes inveigle thee ?

LXXII

‘Dost deem the worth of chastity so low,
And maiden modesty so little prize,
As nightly paramour mid strangers go
And read thy shame in their contemptuous eyes?
Whence the disdainful conqueror may say,
Thy royal mind left with thy royalty,
Let others take such vulgar common prey,
I yield thee up, thou art not worthy me.’

LXXIII

The sophist Love upon the other part
By these allurements led her fancy on:
‘Not born, fair girl, of savage bear thou art,
Nor sprung from rugged and unfeeling stone,
That Cupid’s torch and quiver thou shouldst spurn,
Or fly the soft inthralment of his flame;
Thy heart’s not made of adamant, to turn
His darts aside, or deem his calling shame.

LXXIV

‘Go then where’er Desire allureth thee.
Unkind perhaps thy conqueror appears?
Thou little know’st his sympathies, how he
Grieves with thy grief and weepeth with thy tears.
’Tis thou art unkind, that with such sluggish will
Movest to tend thy love, who scarce survives;
Tancredi sinks, and yet thou sittest still
To watch, ungrateful, over others’ lives.

To lovely Italy's enchanting plains
(Midst Latin wives and Latin mothers), where
True valour lives and true religion reigns.'

LXXVIII

Flattered by such fond hopes, (deluded maid !)
She pictured to herself joy most intense.
But in a thousand doubts involved, oft weighed
How she securely could depart from thence,
Since sentries on the alert patrolled around
The palace, and upon the walls kept guard ;
Nor, in such risk of war, was ever found
Without grave cause a single gate unbarred.

LXXIX

Erminia with the lovely Amazon
Was oft accustomed to prolong her stay ;
Together saw them the declining sun,
Together saw them the ascending day,
And when he had his daily circuit run,
Their rest sometimes a single bed supplied,
Nor any thought, except of love alone,
Did either maiden from the other hide.

LXXX

This fair Erminia did to none impart,
And if at times Clorinda heard her mourn,
To other cause she ascribed her heavy heart :
It seemed as though she wept her fate forlorn.
Each to the other without let could come,
So close their friendship was ; and never closed
Against Erminia was Clorinda's room,
Whether she had gone forth or there reposed.

LXXXI

One day she went, when in another part
Clorinda was, and paused in deep suspense,
Revolving in herself the means and art
By which to escape in secrecy from thence ;
And while her thoughts in restless wild alarms
By various plans distracted were, she spied,
Suspended from aloft, her glittering arms
And snowy cloak : she saw them and she sighed.

LXXXII

And sighing said, in admiration lost,
‘ How happy is that brave intrepid fair !
Oh, how I envy her ! but not the boast
And woman’s pride of loveliness so rare ;
No envious cell confines her valour, no !
Nor cumbrous robes retard the heroic dame :
She dons her arms, and if she wish to go,
She goes ; no fear restrains her and no shame.

LXXXIII

‘ Ah, why did Heaven and partial Nature fail
Me to endow with such stout limbs and breast,
That I might too my woman’s robe and veil
Exchange for corselet and for nodding crest ?
Then neither storm, nor rain, nor heat, nor cold
Had stopped me from going armed to the camp,
Attended, or alone and uncontrolled,
Or by Apollo’s rays or Dian’s lamp.

LXXXIV

‘ Then thou hadst not been, Saracen abhorred,
The first to battle with yon cavalier,
Since I had sprung to meet my darling lord,
Who now perhaps my captive prisoner were.
Then slavery’s chain—but oh ! how sweet and light—
Around him I, his loving foe, had thrown,
And by the bonds that kept him prisoner, might
Have felt relieved the burden of my own.

LXXXV

‘ Or were my side pierced by his gentle hand,
Or by him bared again my stricken heart,
At least his cruel, though unconscious brand,
Had cured the wound inflicted by Love’s dart ;
Then had my mind and wearied body gained
Eternal rest, and pitying my doom,
The victor perhaps had to my ashes deigned
The tribute of his tears and of a tomb.

LXXXVI

‘ But ah ! I wish impossibilities,
And lose myself amid mad thoughts in vain.
Shall I then here in this sad frightened guise,
As one unworthy of my rank, remain ?
No, no, not I ! Confide, my heart, and dare ;
Why should I not for once take arms, and try
For a short time their heavy load to bear,
Though tender and effeminate am I ?

LXXXVII

‘ Yes, yes I will. Love casteth out all fear,
And on the weakest sovran strength bestows.
Inspired by it, ev’n the unwarlike deer
Is armed with ardour, and to battle goes.
But not to war I go : these arms so prized
For an ingenious fraud I would procure ;
I want to feign Clorinda, since disguised
Under her likeness, my departure is sure.

LXXXVIII

‘ Nor will the sentries of the portals be
So bold as her commands to disobey.
I think and think, nor other mode can see ;
This seems the only practicable way.
Now Fortune, aid my innocent deceit,
And Love that didst inspire me with the ways ;
Well suited is the hour for my retreat,
While with the king Clorinda still delays.’

LXXXIX

Thus she determined, urged and goaded on
By Love’s mad frenzy, nor a moment wastes,
But from Clorinda’s chamber to her own
To carry off the stolen armour hastes ;
Which was not hard, since each attendant maid
Left as she came, and she remained alone ;
Her theft was screened, too, by the friendly shade
That night round lovers and round thieves had thrown.

XC

Then seeing the heavens, that erst some stars displayed,
Put on more black and sombre an attire,
No longer she her purposed flight delayed,
But summoned secretly her faithful squire,
And her beloved and confidential maid,
To whom her project she revealed in part ;
She told the object of her flight, but said
That other cause compelled her to depart.

XCI

With bustling haste prepared the loyal squire,
What he considered for their wants most meet.
Erminia then cast off her rich attire,
Whose flowing skirt descended to her feet,
And in her unadorned simplicity
Looked, past all credence, elegant and light ;
Nor was there one assistance gave, save she
Selected as companion of her flight.

XCII

The unyielding steel's incumbent weight offends
Her delicate white neck and golden hair,
Her tender arm beneath the burden bends
Of a huge shield it has not strength to bear.
Refulgent thus in glittering arms, the maid
Constrained herself to assume a martial air ;
Love, near her, smiled, rememb'ring how he made
Alcides once the weeds of women wear.

XCIII

Oh, with what great fatigue she now sustains
The excessive weight, how move her footsteps slow ;
As for support upon her maid she leans,
Who doth before, to give assistance, go !
But love and hope her spirits reinforce,
And to her burdened limbs fresh vigour bring,
So that they reach where wait the squire and horse,
And with all haste into the saddle spring.

XCIV

Disguised they go, and purposely repair
Through the most lone and unfrequented ways,
Yet still with many meet ; the shadowy air
From flashing steel on all sides is ablaze.
Still none their progress venture to arrest,
But yielding up the pathway, backward fall,
Since the white mantle and the dreaded crest,
Ev'n in the dark are recognised by all.

XCV

Though this in part diminishes her doubt,
She cannot all solicitude dissolve ;
Apprehensive in the end to be found out,
She feels the terror of her rash resolve :
But at the gate arrived, she checks her dread,
The guard deluding who that post defends.
' I am Clorinda ! ope the gate,' she said,
' Me on important service the king sends.'

XCVI

So like Clorinda's, her soft voice's charms
Facilitate the trembling girl's deceit ;
(Another maid, not knowing use of arms,
Thus armed and mounted, who would dream to meet ?)
Whence her commands the sentry obeyed, while she
Swift with her escort through the gateway sped,
And then, descending for security,
Through the vale's long and devious cross-roads fled.

XCVII

But when Erminia found herself at last
Deep in the lonely valley, she drew rein,
Nor feared, the first risks having safely passed,
That aught could now impede her or detain.
Then thought of what had not occurred before
To her rapt fancy ; access she perceived
Would still be very difficult, much more
Than in love's fevered transports she believed.

XCVIII

She saw what utter folly she had shown,
In going through bitter foes in warlike guise ;
Moreover she desired to pass unknown,
And first be seen by the beloved eyes.
To him with frank unsullied modesty
She wished to come an unexpected guest ;
Whence, made more cautious by such scruples, she
Paused, and her squire to this effect addressed :

XCIX

‘Thou must, O faithful, my precursor be,
But thou must be both diligent and wise.
Go to the camp, and find one on some plea
To introduce thee where Tancredi lies ;
Tell him that hither hath a lady flown,
Who brings him health, and doth for peace apply :
Peace, since to war Love urges me alone,
Whence he may health experience, solace I ;

C

‘And has in him such trustful lively faith,
As at his hands to feel no shame, no scorn.
Nor breathe but this ; if more he questioneth,
Feign ignorance, and hasten thy return ;
Meanwhile to yonder wood I will retire,
Since it appeareth a secure retreat.’
Thus spake the lady, and that loyal squire
Went, as though wingèd were his nimble feet.

CI

And managed so adroitly his career,
That through the intrenchments he was led, and took
Her message to the couchant cavalier,
Who heard its import with delighted look.
Then, leaving him revolving o’er and o’er
A thousand wild conjectures in his mind,
Back to his mistress courteous answer bore,
That she could safe and secret ingress find.

CII

Impatient she meanwhile, to whom appears
An age each moment, in impetuous mood
The footsteps counts that she in fancy hears :
‘ He reaches—enters—now return he should.’
To her it seems, for which she frets, that he
Uses less speed than wont ; and in suspense,
Gallops at length to an acclivity
Where a first view she catches of the tents.

CIII

’Twas Night, who over the still sleeping world,
Robed in her starry veil, unclouded shone ;
Already shed her luminous rays, impearled
With frost of living pearl, the rising moon ;
Her flame exhaling, the enamoured maid
In fancy soared to those bright realms above ;
And the dumb fields and friendly silence made
The confidants of her devoted love.

CIV

And said, while gazing on the camp below,
‘ How lovely in mine eyes ye tents appear !
The sweet refreshing gales that from you blow
Fresh comfort waft as I approach you near.
So to my stormy and eventful life
May Heaven afford some respite, some release,
As but from you I seek it : mid the strife
Of arms alone, it seems, I meet with peace.

CV

‘Receive me then, and in you let me find
That pity which Love promised to afford,
And which when to captivity consigned,
Was ever shown me by my gentle lord.
Favoured by you, I seek not to make war,
My throne and royal honours to regain;
Reft of my sceptre, I am happier far
To serve as slave with you, than elsewhere reign.’

CVI

Thus spake Erminia, who but little thought
What sad misfortune was in store for her.
She was so placed that the clear moonbeams caught
Her burnished armour, which at every stir
Reflected back the radiant sheen around,
So that afar was seen its brilliancy,
And the great tigress on the silver ground
So brightly sparkled that all said, ‘’Tis she.’

CVII

And as Fate willed it, near the expectant fair
Was stationed a large force in ambuscade,
Whose leaders two Italian brothers were,
Alcander this, that Polypherne, who laid
In wait to cut off all the Turks’ supplies
Of sheep and oxen to the city sent;
And if her esquire passed their watchful eyes,
’Twas that he took a round and swifter went.

CVIII

The youthful Polypherne, whose sire had been
Beneath his eyes by bold Clorinda slain,
Having the white emblazoned armour seen,
Felt sure he saw that warrior fair again, ;
And against her urged on his ambushed band,
Unable his heart's impulse to restrain
(Since, when enraged, he lost all self-command),
Shouting, 'Thou art dead !' and launched his spear in vain.

CIX

As when a hind inflamed with burning thirst,
In search of limpid living water goes
To where from rocks pellucid torrents burst,
Or 'twixt umbrageous banks a river flows ;
Then meets with hounds as her tired frame she tries
To cool in summer shade and crystal clear,
Quick doubles back, and like an arrow flies,
Fatigue and thirst forgotten in her fear ;

CX

So she, who thought Love's burning thirst, that glows
For ever fiercest in the gentlest breast,
To quench in kind reception, and repose
Her mind with such anxiety opprest,
Now made of such impediments aware,
The deadly menace and the clank of steel,
Herself, her love, abandons in despair
And her fleet palfrey pricks with timid beel.

CXI

Away Erminia flies; with wingèd feet
Her destrier flies ; the other damsel too
Follows her flying mistress's retreat,
Nor fails fierce Polypherno to pursue ;
When from the tents, lo ! came the squire in sight,
Bringing the news, but bringing it in vain.
Perplexed he joined the others in their flight,
And fear dispersed them o'er the wide champaign.

CXII

But his more prudent brother, though he, too,
Had her he deemed to be Clorinda seen,
Since he was farther off, did not pursue,
But kept in covert of his ambushed screen ;
And to the camp a herald sent to say
That 'twas not beasts nor fleecy flocks they viewed,
But that Clorinda was the frightened prey
Whom his brave brother Polypherne pursued.

CXIII

Nor did he think, nor was it like, that she
Who not mere soldier but a leader was,
To sally forth at such an hour would be
Tempted, without some grave and urgent cause ;
That he would execute his lord's commands,
Who thus advised could judge of the events.
Such was the news that reached the Christian bands,
And first was heard among the Latin tents.



CANTO VII.

I

THRO' the thick covert of an ancient wood,
Erminia meanwhile by her horse was led ;
To hold the rein her hand no longer could,
And she appeared half living and half dead,
As thro' a thousand paths her untired steed
Bore her at his wild will. At last, from view
Of all she disappeared, and little need
'Twere now for ev'n the swiftest to pursue.

II

As after lengthened and fatiguing chase,
The panting hounds return in downcast mood,
Foiled of their prey, of whom they have lost all trace,
In the thick covert of some sheltering wood ;
Such signs, on their return, of rage and shame
Were in the faces of the Christians viewed.
Bewildered, still fled on the affrighted dame,
Nor once turned round to see if still pursued.

VI

But as she weeps, her plaints are broken by
Clear tones, that seem, nay, truly do proceed
From pastoral voices blent in harmony
With music of the uncultivated reed.
Thither she goes, and one with hoary locks
Sees seated there, the pleasant shades among,
Engaged in weaving baskets near his flocks,
And listening while three little children sung.

VII

The sudden apparition of her arms
Their simple souls affrighted, since so rare ;
Whence, reassuring them from all alarms,
Erminia showed her eyes and golden hair.
'O fortunate, Heaven-belovèd folk,' she cries,
'Your innocent tasks continue, since no wrong
These arms intend against the exercise
Or of your craft, or of your simple song.

VIII

'But tell me, father, how, when all around
The flames of war spread terror through the land,
Thou hast so peaceful an asylum found,
Nor fear'st incursion of marauding band ?'
'Here, son,' he answered, 'free from wrongs and scorn,
My family and flocks have aye remained ;
No clank of steel, nor blast of martial horn,
Has yet the calm of this lone spot profaned.

XII

' Time was—when, in life's dreamy spring-time, man
Most doting is—that other aims I had :
I sdeigned to pasture flocks and herds, and ran
From this sweet spot, where I was born and bred,
And made my way to royal Memphis, where
I ev'n found service in the imperial fort,
And tho' mere keeper of the gardens, there
I saw and knew the vices of a court.

XIII

' By daring hopes seductive impulse led,
I long endured that which I hated most ;
But when the flowers of life's sweet spring had fled,
My spirit bow'd—my expectations crost—
I wept the calm of this low life, and sighing
O'er my lost peace, exclaimed, O courts, farewell !
And to these woods from their false pleasures flying,
Here in contented true enjoyment dwell.'

XIV

As thus he spoke, intent Erminia hung
Upon his lips' sweet accents, for in part
The sage discourse of his experienced tongue
Allayed the storm of her distracted heart.
Whence she resolved, in her unaided strait,
In that remote seclusion to sojourn,
And stay till Fortune should facilitate
The means (the longed-for means) of her return.

ERUSALEM DELIVERED. CANTO VII.

XVIII

Not that no garment could disguise,
Refined and stately manner spoil;
Dignity all recognise,
Through the movements of her lowly toil.
She leads to pasture in the shaws,
The fold brings back the lowing herds,
The coarse teats the milky treasure draws,
Whisking round, she presses into curds.

XIX

Where the flocks lay stretched beneath the shade,
The heat of the sun's noontide flame,
The laurel the enamoured maid
In moss forms inscribed the one loved name.
A thousand trees the graven barks
Of rapt passion's hapless issue told;
The time she saw the tell-tale marks,
Fair cheeks the pearly tear-drops rolled.

XX

'O trees,' exclaimed the weeping maid,
This tale of one who loved too well,
If it hap beneath your grateful shade
And faithful swain should ever dwell,
That heart may feel compassion burn
And record of my woes, and cry,
Cruel, what unjust return,
To and Love to such fidelity!

XXIV

Ev'n did the breath of evening faintly shake
The aspen branches of the elm or beech,
Or did a bird or beast but stir the brake,
That little noise he strove at once to reach.
At last he issued from the wood, and erred
Thro' paths unknown, led by the moon's bright beam,
Towards a faint sound he in the distance heard,
Until he reached the spot from whence it came,

XXV

Arriving where, in lavish overflow,
Clear waters burst forth from the living rock,
And to a river grown, leaped down below,
Thro' banks of emerald green, with noisy shock.
Here he dejected halts, and pensive calls :
He calls ; nor aught save Echo's voice replies.
Meanwhile he sees from out her orient halls
The dawn in white and vermeil beauty rise.

XXVI

Downcast, he groans, and rails in his despair
'Gainst Heaven, which his great happiness denies,
And for his mistress doth loud vengeance swear,
Should she receive the slightest injuries.
He then decided to retrace his way
Campwards, tho' knowing not what course to steer ;
Since he remembered that approached the day
When he should meet the Egyptian cavalier.

XXVII

He left ; and while 'mid cross roads wandering,
Heard the approach of horse, near and more near ;
At length perceived from out the valley spring
One that did like a courier appear.
A whip he shook, and from his shoulders hung
A horn that reached his flank, as is our mode.
Tancredi asked him, in the Syrian tongue,
To the Crusaders' camp the shortest road.

XXVIII

He in Italian : 'Thither am I bent,
Despatched post haste by Boëmond.' Deceived,
Him Tancred followed, deeming he was sent
By his great uncle, and the cheat believed.
At length they reached a stagnant lake, amid
Whose poisonous waters a proud castle lay,
Just at the moment when, his glory hid
In the broad nest of night, down sank the day.

XXIX

Arrived, the courier wound his bugle horn,
And straight was seen a drawbridge to descend.
'Here thou canst tarry till to-morrow morn,
If,' said he, 'Latin, or the Christian's friend.
From the fierce Pagan Count Cosenza took
This island fort, not three days since it fell.'
The place, as there Tancredi fixed his look,
Its site and art had made impregnable.

XXX

A doubt he felt that some mysterious snare
Might lurk concealed within so strong a place ;
But since accustomed risks of death to dare,
He expressed it not, nor showed it by his face :
Where'er by choice or fortune led, the knight
Alone for safety on his arm relies ;
Still for another fray his promised plight
Him rendered loth to any new emprise.

XXXI

He therefore paused before the citadel,
In a broad meadow on the other side,
Where the curved drawbridge, stretching over, fell,
And though invited, followed not his guide ;
When, lo ! on it a belted cavalier,
Of savage and exasperated look,
Who with his right hand grasped a naked spear,
In this despiteful, threatening language spoke :

XXXII

' O thou that com'st from fancy of thine own,
Or led by Fortune to Armida's lands,
Renounce all thoughts of flight, thy arms lay down,
And in her fetters place thy captive hands ;
Enter within her closely-guarded wall,
Nor hope again to see the light of day
(This the condition she prescribes to all),
Though years roll by, though thy brown locks turn grey,

XXXIII

‘ Unless thou swear her forces to augment,
And march ’gainst those that bear Christ’s hated name.’
His eyes on him who spoke Tancredi bent,
And speech and arms both recognised : the same
False Gascon renegade, Rambaldo, who
Fled with Armida, and for her became
Pagan and, sole of all the true, untrue,
The rites defended of that impious dame.

XXXIV

‘ The pious soldier blushed with holy scorn
As thus he answered him : ‘ Vile traitor, know
I am that Tancred who for aye has borne
The sword for Christ, and am His foeman’s foe ;
And through His grace His rebels have subdued,
As when we close in combat thou shalt see ;
Since this right hand, with Heaven’s own wrath indued,
Selected is for vengeance upon thee.’

XXXV

The apostate soldier at that glorious name
Confounded stood ; the colour left his cheek ;
Yet still concealing his alarm and shame,
He cried : ‘ Why dost thou thy destruction seek ?
Here, wretched, vainly will thy strength be spent,
Low in the dust will thy haught head be seen,
And as a present to Prince Godfred sent,
Unless I am changed from what I have ever been.’

XXXVI

Thus spoke the Pagan, and since light of day
Was so obscured that one could scarcely see,
Such numerous lamps blazed forth around, that they
The air illumined with great brilliancy;
The castle shone as on the stage appears
Amid nocturnal pomp the glowing scene,
And from a lofty part Armida hears,
And sees, while she remains herself unseen.

XXXVII

Meanwhile prepared the noble cavalier
His arms and courage for the angry fight,
And vaulted off his feeble distrier,
His foeman seeing on foot. In act to smite
Rambaldo came, unsheathed his falchion shone,
And clad he was in armature entire.
To meet him dashed irate Tancredi on,
With voice of thunder, and with eyes of fire.

XXXVIII

That locked in armour, moved in circles wide,
And fenced and feigned and simulated blows;
This though his limbs were faint and weary, tried
To approach and with his treacherous foeman close,
And still continued, as he still drew back,
To follow on in hot and eager chase,
And thundering, forcing, pressing the attack,
His sword oft drove at the apostate's face;

XXXIX

But more than elsewhere struck impetuously
Where Nature has the parts most vital set ;
Aye aggravating fear by injury,
And blows by many an imperious threat.
Here, there, his lissome limbs upon the field
The nimble Gascon turned, to avoid each blow,
Seeking with sword or with uplifted shield
To ward the strokes of his infuriate foe.

XL

But he was not so ready in defence,
As was the other active to assail ;
Cleft is his shield, his helmet all in rents,
Transfixed and bloody his bright coat of mail,
Nor did a blow from his false arm descend,
That did not its inefficacy prove.
He shakes with fear, as in his heart contend
Despite, remorse, shame-consciousness and love.

XLI

With desperate courage he resolved at last
His desperate fortunes on a die to set ;
He flung his buckler from him, and griped fast
With both his hands his sword, unblooded yet,
Then darted in and grappled with his foe,
And struck ; nor was there any armour could
Resist the power of that tremendous blow :
It maimed his thigh, whence spurted streams of blood.

XLII

Then struck again ; resounding like a bell,
Rang the fierce stroke upon his ample brow,
Nor cleft his casque, tho' with such force it fell,
That he recoiled and staggered from the blow ;
The prince's cheeks became inflamed with ire,
With wrathful lightning his red eye-balls flashed ;
Forth from his visor darted looks of fire,
And his clenched teeth with maddened fury gnashed.

XLIII

The perjured Pagan could not long sustain
The terror his ferocious looks expressed ;
He hears the whistling steel—thro' every vein
It seemed to penetrate his inmost breast.
The stroke he shuns, which on a pillar falls,
That of the flying drawbridge formed a part,
Whence sparks and splinters fly to heaven, and crawls
An icy shudder thro' the traitor's heart.

XLIV

Back to the bridge he flies, in flight alone
His only prospect of escape reposing.
Tancred pursues, and lays his hand upon
The craven's back, as foot with foot is closing ;
When lo ! (great succour for the fugitive)
The stars and torches disappear on high,
Nor in the night now lustreless survive
Ev'n the moon's beams to light the barren sky.

XLV

Lost amid witchcraft and the shades of night,
The victor persevered not in pursuit ;
Around—before—there was no gleam of light,
And he groped on with doubtful, cautious foot ;
Then stepped upon the threshold, undesigned,
Nor knew he had passed the entrance, until he
Heard the portcullis crashing down behind,
And found himself in dark captivity.

XLVI

As fishes rush where in Comacchio's creek
A marshy inlet the Adriatic forms,
To escape the ocean's ruthless waves, and seek
In those still waters refuge from its storms,
It haps that they are by themselves shut in,
Nor from their fenny prison-house can dart,
Since that unique enclosure, like a gin,
Admits all comers, but lets none depart.

XLVII

Tancredi so, whate'er the springs that bound
The wondrous prison, of machine and art,
Entered with ease, but to his horror found
That, though he wished, he could not thence depart.
He shook the gate with all his might and main,
But were his labours scattered to the wind.
Meanwhile a voice exclaimed, 'Thou striv'st in vain,
Armida's captive can no exit find.

LIV

‘Soon shall the Christian plunderer,’ he cried,
‘That has with me the boldness to compare,
Fall on yon plain, in crimson torrents dyed,
And in the dust begrime his flowing hair,
And living, see, spite of his God, this hand
Him of his arms despoil ; and dying, hear
My stern refusal to his last demand,
That from the dogs I would his carcass spare.’

LV

Ev’n as a bull, whom jealous lust incites
With pungent stimulant, doth fiercely roar,
And by his roars his spirit more excites,
And wakes his rage and burning passion more ;
Whetting on trees his horns, he seems to invite
The wind to war with ineffective strokes ;
Furious, he stamps, and to embittered fight
His bellowing rivals from afar provokes ;

LVI

Moved by such fury, the Circassian knight
A herald called, whom curtly he addressed :
‘Speed to the camp, and unto mortal fight
The presence of Christ’s champion knight request.’
Waiting for none, he vaulted on his horse,
And made them lead the captive Frank ahead ;
Then sallied from the town, nor checked his course,
But down the hill precipitantly sped.

LVII

Meanwhile he blew his horn, whose brazen sound
Most dreadful discord through the mountains made,
And, like the peals of thunder rattling round,
All ears offended and all hearts dismayed.
Whence the Frank princes, through the camp
Flew to the Imperial tent ; the herald there
His challenge gave, and named Tancredi first
Yet none excluded who the risk would dare.

LVIII

At that Prince Godfred, hanging in suspense,
Around him gazed with slow enquiring eyes
Nor, though he thought and looked with dilig
Appeared one fit for such an enterprise.
The flower was absent of his chivalry ;
None of Tancredi any tidings knew ;
Afar was Boemond, and self-exiled, he,
The unconquered hero, that Gernando slew.

LIX

Besides the ten that had been drawn by lot,
Each stoutest, bravest, and most famous kn
Had 'neath the guidance of Armida got,
Hid by the silence and the shades of night.
The rest, of hand less bold of heart more wea
Fixed on the ground their eyes, abashed an
Nor thro' such risk would one that honour see
Their very shame by terror was o'ercome.

LX

The silence, look and attitude of those
Soon caused Prince Godfred to perceive their dread ;
Whence, filled with zeal magnanimous, he rose
From where he sat all suddenly, and said :
' Ah, most unworthy of this life were I
Now to withhold it ; and how deep the shame
To let a Pagan with impunity
Thus trample on the honour of our name.

LXI

' Let my camp sit at ease, and thence, secure
From every risk itself, my risks descry.
Bring me my arms—quick, quick !' His armature
Was brought him in the twinkling of an eye ;
But loyal Raymond, who, mature in years,
Mature was likewise in advice and lore,
Whose vigour matched the youngest cavalier's,
Threw himself straight the pious chief before.

LXII

' No, no, my liege,' he cried ; ' we can't allow
That the whole camp be jeopardised in thee.
Not simple soldier, but the chief, art thou ;
Public, not private, then the loss would be.
On thee our empire and our faith depend ;
Destroyed by thee shall be proud Babel's throne ;
Let others boldly with the sword contend,
Fight thou by counsel and command alone.

LXIII

‘But though old age condemns me to go bent,
It never shall be said that I refuse.
Let others shun war’s stern experiment,
My years shall not my backwardness excuse.
Oh, were I in the prime of life, like ye
That trembling stand aloof, false cavaliers,
Unmoved by shame or animosity
’Gainst him who hurls such insults in your ear

LXIV

‘Would I were what I was when in the view
Of all Germania, at great Conrad’s court,
His breast transfixing, Leopold I slew ;
My vigorous frame then needed no support :
And was my prowess more distinctly shown
In bringing back the spoils of such a knight,
Than if one now, unarmed and all alone,
Put hosts of yon ignoble hordes to flight ?

LXV

‘Could youthful blood once more such strength in
I had already slain yon cavalier ;
Such as I am, however, my stout heart
Within me droops not—old, I feel no fear ;
And should I fall upon the battle-field,
Victory, be sure, will cost the Pagan dear.
Arm, arm I will, perhaps this day to gild
With further honour still my past career.’

LXVI

Thus spake the sage. Like spurs, his words restore
The dormant valour of both old and young,
And those who timorous were and mute before,
Are now most glib and daring with the tongue.
Each now demands the combat for himself,
Nor are there any show the slightest fear :
It Baldwin craves, and with Ruggiero, Guelph,
The brothers Guido, Stephen, and Gernier ;

LXVII

And Pyrrhus, who the lauded stratagem made
In giving Antioch to Boëmond ;
The same wish too most eagerly displayed
Everard, Ridolpho, and brave Rosamond,
One Scotch, one Irish, and one English, lands
That from our world are parted by the sea ;
Gildippe and Edward make the same demands,
Spouses that still uxorious lovers be.

LXVIII

But the old count far more than any sought
The danger and the glory of the task ;
Armed he already was, nor wanted aught
To his complete equipment, save his casque.
To whom, ' O living mirror,' Godfred said,
' Of antique worth, may all beholding thee
Catch the reflection which thy virtues shed,
Thou soul of honour and bright chivalry.

LXIX

‘O that I had ten other souls indued,
Among our youth, with gallantry like thine ;
Ne’er would I rest till Babel were subdued,
And spread from pole to pole the Cross divine.
But yield, I pray thee, and reserve in turn
Thyself for deeds more fitting age, nor grudge
That the others cast their names into an urn,
And from among them all let Fortune judge.

LXX

‘Nay, God be judge, the servants of whose will
Are Fate and Fortune,’ the good prince exclaimed,
But could not change Raimondo’s thoughts ; he still
Wished with the other champions to be named.
The lots then Godfred in his helmet threw ;
And when well mixed and shaken were the same,
In the first number that from it he drew,
Was read the noble Count Toulouse’s name.

LXXI

His name was welcomed with applausive cries,
Nor any ventured Fortune’s choice to blame ;
Fresh vigour seemed to sparkle in his eyes,
And he as lithe and juvenile became
As when in summer garb a serpent drest
Glistens with gold and shimmers in the sun.
The captain cheered him more than all the rest,
And augured victory as already won.

LXXII

And his own sabre taking from his flank,
Gave it, and thus the gallant count addressed :
' This is the sabre which the rebel Frank,
Rodolph of Saxony, of yore possessed ;
From him I took it, and took with it too
His life, by crimes innumerable stained.
Take it, and may it in thy hands renew
The laurels that in mine it has obtained.'

LXXIII

Meanwhile, impatient at their long delay,
The truculent Turk with threatening gesture cries :
' Oh, unmatched people, Europe's brave array,
Behold one man your mighty host defies :
Let Tancred come, who seemed so fierce of late,
If he have such reliance as before ;
Or, couched on downy pillows, doth he wait
For night to aid him, as it did of yore ?

LXXIV

' But if he fear, let others come. Come all,
Come horse and foot in one united band,
Since 'mid your hosts none answers to my call,
Or dares to meet me singly hand to hand.
Ye see the tomb where Mary's Son once lay ?
Why not advance there, and your vows record.
Why, cowards, pause ? ye see where lies the way,
Or do you keep for greater need your sword ?'

LXXV

The brutal Saracen with such-like taunts
The Christians did as with a scourge inflame ;
But most of all beneath his braggart vaunts
Raimondo writhed, nor could endure the shame.
His valour, goaded, still more fierce became,
And gained on wrath's rough whetstone greater force ;
Sudden he sprang on Aquiline, whose name
Was given from speed unrivalled in the course.

LXXVI

Born by the Tagus was his destrier, where
At times the mothers of the warrior drove
(When spring's soft season instigates the mare
With natural instinct and desire of love),
Run open-mouthed against the teeming air,
Which its prolific seeds doth introduce ;
And by warm breath impregn'd (O marvel rare !)
Conceive the greedy mothers, and produce.

LXXVII

And of a truth this Aquiline, you'd say,
Was worthy offspring of his sire the wind,
Or if you saw him lightly bound away
Across the sand, nor leave a trace behind,
Or curvet trippingly from left to right
In mazy circles of the narrowest space.
Mounted on such a steed, the noble knight
Dashed to the assault, and heavenwards turned his face :

LXXVIII

'O God! that erst directedst arms unskilled
In Terebintus 'gainst Goliah, so
That Judah's scourge was by a stripling killed,
And the first pebble laid the giant low,
Grant that I make a like example too.
Thy aid to slay this felon, I implore ;
May feeble age now arrogance subdue,
As feeble youth accomplished it of yore.'

LXXIX

Thus prayed the pious count : his prayers sincere,
Moved by firm hope in Jesu, upwards rise,
Winging their flight to the celestial sphere,
As fire ascends by nature to the skies ;
The Eternal Father heard, and from the band
Of His supernal hosts an angel chose
Him to protect from the impious Pagan's hand,
And bring him safe in triumph from his foes.

LXXX

The angel who, by the Divine decree,
Was chosen Raymond's guardian, at his birth—
Aye, from the hour in which, an infant, he
Began his fatal pilgrimage on earth—
Now that heaven's King commanded him anew
To undertake the charge of his defence,
With outspread pinions to the fortress flew
Where stored are all heaven's warlike implements.

LXXXI

Here is preserved the lance by which, of yore,
The serpent fell ; the thundering bolts are here,
And shafts, themselves invisible, that pour
Plagues, pests, and famine on this lower sphere ;
Here hangs the trident whose terrific shocks
With dire affright earth's habitants confound,
When the foundations of the world it rocks,
And levels proudest cities with the ground.

LXXXII

Sparkling amid the other arms is seen
A diamond shield, of size so marvellous
That it can cover all the lands between
The distant Atlas and the Caucasus ;
Beneath the shelter of its ægis lie
Chaste, holy cities—princes just and good ;
This the angel took, and with it secretly
Approached the spot where his Raimondo stood.

LXXXIII

By a mixed crowd meanwhile the walls were filled ;
When the fell tyrant bold Clorinda sent,
With a strong escort of his troops most skilled,
Who halted half-way down, nor farther went ;
To the same end some Christian squadrons reined
Their destriers up upon the other side ;
Thus a large space 'twixt either camp remained
For the two combatants, unoccupied.

LXXXIV

Arganté stared, not seeing Tancredi there,
But the strange features of an unknown knight ;
When the count forward strode and said: ' Elsewhere,
Haply for you, is he you seek in fight.
Yet not exult therefore ; you see one here
Prepared your proofs of valour to disprove,
And represent the absent cavalier,
Or on his own account take up your glove.'

LXXXV

Smiling, the braggart scornfully replied :
' What doth Tancredi ? Where is his retreat ?
He threatens Heaven with arms, and yet doth hide,
For safety trusting to his nimble feet ;
But let him to earth's—ocean's centre flee,
No spot shall screen him from my vengeance due.'
' You lie,' replied the count, ' to say that he
Flees, who is worth a thousand such as you.'

LXXXVI

At this outroared the furious Saracen :
' Take you the field then, and his place supply,
And quickly we shall see how you maintain
The bold bravado of those words, " You lie ! " '
Thus to the tilt they spurred—their blood inflamed,
Each aiming at the other's helm ; and tho'
Raimondo struck the Pagan where he aimed,
He scarcely moved him in his saddle-bow.

LXXXVII

On the other hand, Arganté was descried
Vainly (rare case with him) to use his spear,
Since the good angel turned the stroke aside
From the protected Christian cavalier.
His teeth with fury the foiled savage gnashed,
His spear he cursed and shivered on the plain,
Then drew his sword, and at Raimondo dashed
A second time with all his might and main,

LXXXVIII

And pressed his steed straightforward, in despite,
As when a ram bows down his head to butt ;
But Raymond shunned his charge, and to the right
Wheeled, and delivered on his front a cut.
The Egyptian cavalier turned round again,
To the right again the wary Christian sprung,
And caught him on his helm—but all in vain,
Upon the adamant his sabre rung.

LXXXIX

But, to close quarters covetous to come,
The Pagan tried to rush in on his foe,
Who fearing he must to such weight succumb,
And both his own and destrier's overthrow,
Gives way—attacks—then scours across the plain,
Twisting and turning from his hot pursuit ;
The slightest, gentlest pressure of the rein
His quick steed follows with unerring foot,

XC

As captain who some lofty tower invests,
'Mid marshes placed, or on a beetling mount,
Tries countless openings, nor contented rests
With these or those—so wandered round the count ;
And since he could not pierce the well-wrought scales
That armed the Saracen from head to heel,
The weaker parts and joinings he assails,
An entrance seeking 'twixt the plates of steel.

XCI

His foeman's arms he had already hacked,
And blood oozed forth thro' many a gaping rent ;
But still the count preserved his own intact,
Nor lost a single plume or ornament.
Into fresh rage Arganté vainly broke,
Vainly he smote and wasted strength and ire,
Yet grew not tired, but doubled every stroke,
And seemed fresh force from failure to acquire.

XCII

And 'mid unnumbered blows, the Saracen
At last struck one when Raymond was so near,
That able scarce had been fleet Aquiline
To save his lord, who must have fallen ; but here
The angel failed not succour to afford,
Who hovered close, from mortal eye concealed ;
With outstretched arm, he caught his cruel sword
Upon the diamond of the heavenly shield.

XCIII

The sword snapped short—no earthly tempered steel,
Forged by the arm of mortal, could withstand
The arms, unmixed and incorruptible,
Of heavenly smith—and fell upon the sand.
Arganté scarce, though seeing on the ground
The splintered fragments, could believe his sight,
And marvelled, as unarmed himself he found,
To know what armour armed the Christian knight.

XCIV

Truly he deemed his sword was broken by
The massive buckler of that doughty chief;
Not knowing who descended from the sky,
The gallant Raymond had the same belief,
Who, when he saw his foe disarmed, awhile
Paused in suspense, and from the fight refrained,
Deeming those worthless palms and laurels vile
At such advantage from another gained.

XCV

‘Take’—he was going to say—‘another sword,’
When other thoughts sprang up and made him pause,
Since by defeat disgrace would be incurred,
He being the champion of a public cause;
Thus, though vile palms he scorned, he would not place
In risk their common honour. As he hung
Divided by these thoughts, against his face
The hilt and pommel base Arganté flung.

XCVI

And at the same time pricked his destrier,

And tried his foe to mine in close embrace :

XCIX

Arganté, such thy peril, when to aid
Thy cause himself Beëlzebub disposed ;
He of thin air an unsubstantial shade,
In form of man (strange prodigy !) composed ;
It feigned Clorinda's noble face and air,
Her silver surcoat and resplendent arms.
He gave it speech, and, though no mind was there,
Her well-known voice, her bearing, and her charms.

C

The phantom went to Oradine, and cried
(An archer he of wondrous skill and fame) :
' Oh, Oradine, who, where thou wilt, canst guide
The flying shaft, and never miss thy aim,
What loss 'twould be if such a worthy knight,
Judæa's bold defender, were to die,
And in his spoils, triumphant from the fight,
Unscathed return his mortal enemy !

CI

' Now prove thy skill—thy fatal arrow dye
In yon Frank robber's blood ; thy gracious lord,
Besides the lasting fame, thou may'st rely,
Will pay thee back commensurate reward.'
Thus spake the shade ; nor did the archer doubt,
Soon as he heard of guerdon for the blow,
But from his quiver drew an arrow out,
Affixed it to the cord, and bent the bow.

CV

At the first shock was heard the ringing sound
Of shivered spear, of splintering helm and shield ;
Here lay a destrier prostrate on the ground,
There, riderless, one galloped o'er the field ;
Here lay a warrior dead ; still breathing, there
Another sobbed and groaned, another sighed.
Fierce was the fight ; and as more close they were,
More fierce the struggle grew on either side.

CVI

Into the middle lithe Arganté sprung,
And from a soldier snatched an iron mace,
And, bursting through the serried masses, swung
It round and round, and soon cleared ample space,
But only Raymond sought ; his steel and ire
'Gainst him alone were turned with frantic hate ;
Like greedy wolf, his ravening desire
Was on his blood his appetite to sate.

CVII

But soon his path is so beset with foes,
And so encumbered, that it checks his course ;
'Gainst him Ormanno, Balneville oppose,
With Guido and the Gerards, all their force.
Yet paused not he, nor slacked, nay, grew more hot
The more he hindrance from those galliards found,
As fire pent up within a narrow spot
Bursts forth, and spreads still greater ruin round.

CVIII

He wounded Guido, Prince Ormanno slew,
And languid Roger stretched among the slain ;
But still the crowds increased, and round him drew
A serried cirque of bristling arms and men :
While through his valour was maintained the fray
On equal terms between the rival foes,
Godfred his brother called, and said : ' Away!
And on the Paynim with thy squadron close ;

CIX

' And 'gainst their left, where seems most desperate
The battle's rage, lead on thy serried ranks.'
Away he dashed, and was the shock so great
With which he charged his adversary's flanks,
That Asia's languid sons had not the force
To stand the impetuous onslaught of the Frank :
The line is broken, and beneath their horse
The Pagan cavalry and standards sank.

CX

From the same charge the right wing turned and fled,
Nor was there any made the least defence,
Except Arganté ; with loose rein they sped
Headlong, impelled by fear's o'erwhelming sense.
Alone he stood his ground, and showed bold front ;
Nor had Briareus with a hundred hands
Equalled Arganté in the battle's brunt,
Though fifty shields he waved, and fifty brands.

CXI

The charge of cavalry, the thrusts, the blows,
And flying shafts, he valiantly sustained ;
Able for all he seemed, as now on those
He boldly threw himself, now these restrained.
Bruised were his limbs, his armour hacked and torn,
Tho' blood and sweat he poured, unconscious all ;
At last, by surging numbers overborne,
He with the crowd was backward forced to fall.

CXII

His back he turned to that great torrent's might
That swept him on, and forced him to withdraw,
Tho' step or heart betrayed no signs of flight,
If thro' his hand's bold deeds that heart you saw.
Terror still shone from his defiant eyes,
Which failed not their old menace to retain ;
And superhuman were his energies
To check the flying masses, but in vain.

CXIII

Not ev'n could that Magnanimous obtain,
That they retired in more collected bands ;
Since fear obeys no reason and no rein,
Nor heedeth now entreaties or commands.
But pious Buglion had no sooner viewed
That Fortune turned to favour his intent,
Than the smooth path of victory he pursued,
And fresh assistance to the victors sent.

CXVII

And to her comrades cried, 'For us contends
Heaven, and Eternal Justice aid affords ;
Not in our faces its fierce wrath descends,
Hence, unencumbered, we can use our swords.
Angered alone 'gainst them Heaven's fury drives,
Right in the teeth of our affrighted foes ;
Their arms it strikes, and them of light deprives :
Then on, where Fate the path to victory shows.'

CXVIII

Thus cheered the Pagans, and upon her back
Alone receiving the outburst of Hell,
Made 'gainst the Franks a desperate attack,
Scorning the blows that from them idly fell.
At the same time Arganté, turning too,
Sad havoc 'mong the former victors made,
As from the field they panic-stricken flew,
And to the sword and storm their backs displayed.

CXIX

The wrath immortal and the mortal sword
To strike the affrighted fugitives combined ;
And streams of blood, mixed with the rain that poured,
That scene of murderous strife encarnadined.
Here, amid heaps of dying and of dead,
Pyrrhus and brave Ridolpho breathless lie ;
The latter's life-blood the Circassian shed,
The former was Clorinda's victory.

CXX

Thus fled the Franks, and still in eager chase



CANTO VIII. ^{b w}

I

THE wind to vent its violence had ceased,
Hushed was the storm, no more the thunder rolled,
When fair Aurora issued from the east,
With brow of roses and with foot of gold ;
Yet ceased not from their hellish arts and aim
Those fiends infernal who the tempest woke ;
Nay, one of them, Astagoras by name,
Thus to his comrade, foul Alecto, spoke :

II

‘ Alecto, see yon cavalier arrive
(Nor can his progress all our arts delay),
Who from the ruthless hands has ’scaped alive
Of the supreme defender of our sway ;
Now he, relating to the Franks the fate
Of his bold leader and his comrades’ fall,
Important tidings will disseminate,
Whence they, I fear, Rinaldo may recall.

III

‘Thou knowest how fatal that. We must oppose

VI

‘ Sweno, the King of Denmark’s only son,
The prop and glory of his falling years,
Burned to be ranked with those that have girt on
The sword ’neath thee as Jesus’ cavaliers ;
Nor dread of danger, nor the fear of toil,
Nor lust of rule, nor love of his old sire,
Could his praiseworthy resolution foil,
Or of his generous bosom quench the fire.

VII

‘ He longed to learn the military art,
And stern laborious warfare to endure
’Neath thee, its master ; and he felt in part
Disgrace that his name should remain obscure,
While upon all sides was Rinaldo’s heard,
To whose green youth was golden glory given ;
But more than by all motives he was stirred,
Not by mere earthly fame, but zeal for Heaven.

VIII

‘ At last, delay he could no longer brook,
But a bold squadron of associates chose,
And straight his way towards distant Thracia took,
Where the empire’s seat, august Byzantium, rose ;
There the Greek king received him in his hall,
There, too, arrived a herald in thy name,
Who did the news of mighty Antioch’s fall,
How won it was, and then how held, proclaim—

IX

‘ Held ’gainst the Persian, who besieged it then,
And with such numbers the blockade maintained,
It seemed as tho’ of all its arms and men
That populous empire was entirely drained.
Of thee he spoke, and many another knight,
Until Rinaldo reaching, he delayed
To tell the story of his daring flight,
And of his glorious acts in the Crusade.

X

‘ And added, that to storm these gates, the Franks
In force already congregated were ;
And then invited him to join their ranks,
And in at least their crowning victory share.
These words so fired the youthful Sweno’s breast,
That every hour appeared to him an age
Till ’gainst the Turks he placed his lance in rest,
And in their blood had quenched his noble rage.

XI

‘ It seemed he felt his indolence reproved
By others’ glory, nor that thought could bear ;
Nor was by counsel or entreaty moved,
Or that he would not list, or did not hear.
No risk he feared, excepting not to find
Himself in all thy risks and fame comprised ;
This was the gravest peril in his mind,
Others he either saw not, or despised.

XII

‘ And he himself precipitated fate,
Fate which forced us, and led him willing on,
So that he would not for his going wait,
Ev’n for the rising of the morrow’s sun.
To him the shorter seemed the better way :
’Twas that our lord and gallant leader chose ;
No pathless pass did his advance delay,
Nor shunned he lands tho’ overrun by foes.

XIII

‘ Now toilsome march we met, now want of food,
Now open force, now ambuscades ; but those,
And every other hardship, we subdued.
Now slain, now routed, were our various foes ;
Success had confidence engendered, nay,
Had made us both vainglorious and supine.
At length encamped we were, one fatal day,
Upon the boundaries of Palestine.

XIV

‘ There from the watchful scouts our leaders learned
That clank of arms they could distinctly hear ;
Had indications seen, and flags discerned,
From which they judged a numerous force was near.
Nor voice or colour, countenance or thought,
Changed our bold leader when he heard the tale ;
Many there were tho’, when the news was brought,
Whose cheeks from lily-livered fear grew pale.

XV

‘ But Sweno cried, “ How near we now possess
The victor’s laurel or the martyr’s crown !
The first I hope for most, nor covet less
That which has greater worth and like renown.
This field, O brothers ! where we are standing now
A shrine of deathless memory will be,
To which posterity will point, and show
The tokens of our death or victory.”

XVI

‘ This said, at once the sentries he disposed,
Their various duties upon each assessed ;
He willed that none without being armed reposed,
Nor of his armour would himself divest ;
Twas now that hour most friendly to repose
And solemn silence, when a barbarous yell,
So deafening, thro’ the startled welkin rose,
That to high heaven it reached and down to hell.

XVII

“ To arms ! to arms ! ” a thousand voices cried,

on .

XVIII

‘ In the unequal combat (for our foes
At least had twenty soldiers to our one)
Many were wounded by the random blows
Struck under covert of the dusk ; but none
Distinguish could among the blinding shades,
How many fell upon that fatal field,
Since both our losses and heroic deeds
Were by the night’s Cimmerian shroud concealed.

XIX

‘ Still his bold brow so proudly Sweno raised,
That amid all ’twere easy him to tell ;
Ev’n in the dark his prowess all amazed,
His valiant deeds appeared incredible.
A mound of dead—a stream of running gore
Round him a rampire and a moat had made ;
Where’er he turned, the youthful hero bore
Fright in his eyes—destruction in his blade.

XX

‘ Thus battled we until the morrow’s dawn
Had o’er the heavens her roseate mantle spread ;
But when the nightly horrors were withdrawn,
That had concealed the horrors of the dead,
The wished-for light our hearts with terror thrilled
When was revealed that most appalling sight
With corpses was the entire encampment filled,
And scarcely any had survived the night.

XXI

‘ Two thousand once, and not a hundred now !
When Sweno had that frightful carnage seen,
’Twere hard to say, by his unruffled brow,
If his heart felt the horror of the scene.
He showed it not—nay, loudly shouting, said :
“ With those our gallant comrades let us vie,
Who, spurning the dark regions of the dead,
Have traced in blood a pathway to the sky.”

XXII

‘ His looks the impress of his spirit wore,
Happy, I ween, at his approaching death ;
Against the barbarous ruin he still bore
A heart intrepid, filled with firmest faith ;
No temper had been able to sustain,
Tho’ of the finest steel or diamond,
The blows with which he deluges the plain :
His body now became one single wound.

XXIII

‘ Undying valour, not poor life, sustained
That fierce unyielding corpse ; still blow for blow
He gave, nor yet his deathless arm refrained ;
The more they strike, the more he struck—when, lo !
’Gainst him advanced a most infuriate knight,
That all in size and savage look surpassed,
Who, after obstinate and lengthened fight,
Aided by hosts, prostrated him at last.

XXIV

‘The youth unconquered fell—ah, bitter fate!
Nor was there one that could avenge his fall;
Ah, my lord’s relics—ah, inanimate
Blood shed so nobly, upon you I call,
That I was not then covetous of life,
Or shunned the brunt of battle, and had I
Fallen by God’s will in that disastrous strife,
I had not ill deserved with him to die.

XXV

‘Among the dead alone I fell alive;
Nor did they deem me such that left me: so
Benumbed was every sense, in vain I strive
To recollect what then befell the foe;
But when recovered from that death-like trance,
Mine eyes, erst sealed in gloom, regained their sight,
Midnight it seemed, and my enfeebled glance
Descried the flicker of a little light.

XXVI

‘Still not sufficient virtue I possessed
Things clearly to discern, but saw as those
Half sleeping, half awake, in fitful rest,
Who now their eyelids open and now close;
And now my cruel wounds began to tease,
And with still greater anguish torture me;
Racked by the nipping frost and midnight breeze,
The earth my couch, the stars my canopy.

XXVII

‘ Meanwhile that light drew nearer and more near,
Until it came and rested at my side,
And silent whisperings murmured in my ear.
Though able scarce to raise my head, I spied
Two figures clothed in flowing robes ; they stood
With torches in their hands, and whispered : “ Place
Thy trust in Him who ne’er forgets the good,
But ever prayer anticipates by grace.”

XXVIII

‘ Thus having spoke the reverend strangers, one
His hand stretched over me, as if to bless,
And breathed in low and reverential tone
Words little heard, and comprehended less.
“ Rise,” he then added. I, alert and sound,
Rôse, nor the anguish of my wounds perceived ;
Nay—gracious miracle—my limbs I found
New strength and new-born virtue had received.

XXIX

‘ Stupid, I stared ; nor could my soul receive
As truth the miracle it felt was true ;
Whence one—“ What, faithless mortal, not believe !
What doubts distract, what thoughts unsettle you ?
This is substantial flesh you see in us ;
Servants we are of Jesus, who have fled
The world, so sweet-tongued, yet so treacherous,
And hermit lives in this lone desert led.

XXX

“The Almighty Lord, who everywhere doth reign,
For thy salvation did myself elect ;
He by ignoble means does not disdain
Ends both sublime and wondrous to effect ;
Nor wills that body should neglected be,
In which once dwelt a soul so worthy—even
That form which, clothed in immortality,
Must with the soul again unite in heaven.

XXXI

“I mean Prince Sweno’s corpse ; for which shall be
A tomb erected worthy his high fame,
Where aye the finger of posterity
With pride will point to his undying name.
But to the stars lift up your sight ; behold
That sun like one which sparkles in the skies ;
It will conduct you, with its rays of gold,
To where the corpse of your brave leader lies.”

XXXII

‘From that sublime irradiation—nay,
From that nocturnal sun a beam descended,
And straight to where his glorious body lay,
It like a pencil’s golden line extended,
And o’er it shed such floods of dazzling light,
That brightly shone and sparkled every wound.
At once I recognised the lifeless knight,
Amid the frightful carnage spread around.

XXXIII

‘ Not prone to earth he grovelling lay, but, even
As starwards ever tended his desires,
He kept his face fixed steadily on heaven,
Like one who thereunto, enrapt, aspires ;
His threatening right hand, round the hilt comprest,
Ready to strike, a naked falchion bore ;
The left was humbly laid upon his breast,
And seemed God’s grace and pardon to implore.

XXXIV

‘ While with my tears I bathed each gaping wound,
Yet could not thus my soul-felt grief subdue,
The holy sage his closed right hand unbound,
And from its grasp his blood-stained sabre drew.
“ This,” he exclaimed, “ which has to-day outpoured
Such streams of blood, with which it is crimsoned yet,
Is perfect, as you know ; nor is there sword
That better merits such an epithet.

XXXV

“ Whence if it now through cruel death departs
From its first lord, by Heaven’s supreme command
It shall not rest inactive in these parts,
But pass along from hand to valiant hand,
Which then shall use it with like force and skill,
But longer and more fortunately too ;
And on the Paynim that did Sweno kill
Shall wreak dire vengeance, as its rightful due.

XXXVI

“ By Solyman was gallant Sweno slain,
By Sweno's sword must Solymano fall ;
Receive it, then, and hasten to the plain,
Where the Frank host besieges Salem's wall ;
Nor needest thou, tho' in a foreign land,
Fresh interruption to thy journey fear,
Since will be smoothed all dangers by the hand
Of Him who now directs thy footsteps there.

XXXVII

“ There 'tis His will thy voice should testify—
That voice which He so wondrously preserved—
The valorous spirit and deep piety
Which thou hast in thy well-loved lord observed ;
That his example should the world inspire
To bear the purple Cross, and animate
All noble spirits with the like desire,
His deeds throughout all time to emulate.

XXXVIII

“ It but remains to know his name, my son,
Who of the sword is the predestined heir ;
That is the youth Rinaldo, with whom none
In point of valour can the least compare.
Give it to him, and say, to him alone
Both heaven and earth for retribution look.”
While thus intent I hung upon each tone,
Another wonder my attention took.

XXXIX

‘ For there, where Sweno’s noble corse reposed,
All of a sudden I beheld a tomb,
That, rising up, his lifeless form enclosed ;
Nor can I tell how raised there, or by whom :
The name and worth of the departed knight
A few brief words recorded. All amazed,
I knew not how to leave that wondrous sight,
As on the letters, on the stone I gazed.

XL

“ Here, near his faithful friends,” resumed the sage,
“ Inshrined the body of thy lord shall lie,
While their souls gain a glorious heritage
Of love and joy eternal in the sky ;
But having with thy tears thy duty done,
Now to repose the shades of eve invite ;
Be thou my guest, then, till to-morrow’s sun
With its new beams thy matin journey light.”

XLI

‘ He ceased, and led me up and down among
Wild ways that I with difficulty passed,
Till at a hollow cave, that beetling hung
From savage rocks, we stayed our steps at last.
This his abode ; here he, ’mid wolves and bears,
Dwells with his friend secure, since less defence
The steel-clad soldier in his armour wears,
Than man unarmed, in holy innocence.

XLII

‘ Here to my limbs hard bed and hermit fare
Refreshment gave, and much desired repose ;
But when the matin beams rekindled were,
And the dawn pranked in gold and purple rose,
The wakeful hermits failed not to perceive
The light that summoned them to morning prayer,
And rose ; and with them I—then took my leave,
And bent my course, as they directed, here.’

XLIII

Here ceased the Dane, and thus the pious chief :
‘ Sad news thou bringest to the camp, sir knight,
Nor fails thy narrative, so fraught with grief,
In us congenial sorrow to excite,
Since from us friends so ready with the sword
An hour has snatched, absorbed a little clay.
Like heaven’s own lightning, thy illustrious lord
Flashed for a moment, and then passed away.

XLIV

‘ But then, far happier was his bloody doom,
Than that of those who gold and realms bequeath,
Nor can the Capitol record to whom
Was given more worthily its laurel wreath :
They in the lucent temple of the sky
With victory’s deathless coronets are crowned,
There show the tokens of their gallantry,
And point contented to each glorious wound.

XLV

‘ But thou, that for the toils and perils new
Of the world’s warfare still remainest here,
Shouldst in their glorious triumphs triumph too,
And of its gloom thy clouded aspect clear ;
And since Bertholdo’s son thou seekest, know
That from the camp are turned his flying feet,
Nor in direction doubtful shouldst thou go,
Till we have learned sure news of his retreat.’

XLVI

This their discourse awakened and renewed
Love of Rinaldo, and with friendly ruth
Many exclaimed, ‘ Alas ! ’mid Pagans rude,
Imperilled, wanders the adventurous youth ;’
Nor is there one but in his favour pleads,
Recounting his great exploits to the Dane,
And the long web of his heroic deeds,
To his surprise, they unravel and explain.

XLVII

Now while all hearts with tender pity yearned,
At bare remembrance of Bertholdo’s son,
Lo ! to the encampment many of those returned
Who to the fields a foraging had gone,
Bringing in great abundance with them, beeves
And fleecy cattle carried off by force,
With but a scant supply of golden sheaves
And straw to assuage the hunger of the horse.

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## XLVIII

Back, too, they signs of dire misfortune brought,  
That seemed to all appearances most true,  
The snowy cloak in which Rinaldo fought,  
All torn and bloody, and his arms pierced through.  
Soon (for who could such circumstances hide ?)  
A vague uncertain rumour 'mong them spread,  
And sorrowing thousands pressed from every side,  
To see the armour of the mighty dead.

## XLIX

They saw and recognised the ponderous mass  
Of his huge hauberk and its blaze of light,  
Marked the haught eagle on his bright cuirass,  
Proving her brood in the sun, ere trust their flight ;  
Those stainless arms they used to see of old  
Foremost, or all unaided, in the fight,  
Not without deep compassion they behold  
Lie in such bloody and disordered plight.

## L

While the camp whispered, and his friends, appalled,  
Rinaldo's death on various causes lay,  
The pious Godfred Aliprando called,  
Leader of those that had brought back the prey,  
One of curt, truthful speech and liberal mind ;  
To whom the captain : ' The whole truth reveal ;  
Say where and how you did this armour find,  
Nor from me aught, or good or ill, conceal.

## LI

‘ From here so distant, captain,’ he replies,  
‘ As in two days a messenger could ride,  
Towards Gaza’s confines, a small plateau lies,  
Shut in by hills, and of the high-road wide ;  
Through it, its source above, a river steals,  
Softly and slowly, where intricate shade  
Of tangled trees and matted brake conceals  
A spot most suitable for ambuscade.

## LII

‘ There we had gone in search of flocks that might  
Chance to depasture on its herbous shore,  
When on the bank we spied a lifeless knight,  
And found the grass encarnadined with gore ;  
The arms, though fouled, at the first glance we knew,  
And the haught crest, at which aghast all shrunk ;  
To see the features I then nearer drew,  
But found the head was severed from the trunk.

## LIII

‘ The right hand, too, was gone, and many a wound  
From back to breast transfix’d the mighty dead.  
Near lay an empty helmet on the ground,  
On which the eagle its white wings outspread ;  
When as I sought for information, lo !  
A solitary peasant loomed in sight,  
Who when he saw us turned his back to go,  
And darted off in most precipitous flight.



## LIV

‘ Pursued and captured, he at length replied  
To our repeated questions, and revealed  
That on the previous day large bands he spied  
From the woods sally, where he lay concealed,  
One of whom by its golden locks upheld  
A severed head with clotted blood besmeared,  
Which, as it with attention he beheld,  
That of a youthful beardless boy appeared.

## LV

‘ That it the same soon afterwards suspended  
In a silk apron from his saddle-bow,  
And that from their attire he apprehended  
They, like ourselves, were Christian soldiers, too.  
I made them strip the corse, so deeply grieving,  
That the bare doubt caused tears in floods to fall ;  
The arms I took away, injunctions leaving  
To give the dead befitting burial.

## LVI

‘ But if the corse be that which I believe,  
Far other tomb and pomp it merits well.’  
Thus Aliprando spoke, then took his leave,  
Since he had no more certain facts to tell.  
Pensive Prince Godfred stood, and deeply sighed ;  
Still of his sad suspicion felt not sure,  
And of the headless trunk and homicide  
Wished evidence more certain to procure.

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## LX

A mighty bust's incarnate form she feigned,  
From which the right hand and the head were gone ;  
Her left a reeking severed skull sustained,  
With blood bedabbled, and from pallor wan.  
The lifeless features breathed, and breathing spoke,  
And speaking, poured forth blood and many a sigh :  
' Fly your false leader's tents and hateful yoke.  
See you not yet the truth ? Argillan, fly !

## LXI

' Who will protect you, comrades, from the fraud  
Of ruthless Godfred, who has murdered me ?  
By blackest envy is the villain gnawed,  
Nor thinks he but how you may murdered be.  
Still, if your hand aspired to noble praise,  
If in it place such confidence you could,  
Fly not ! no, no, but let the wretch appease  
My guileless shade with his malignant blood.

## LXII

' A shadow ministrant, with steel and ire  
I'll arm your hand, and animate your breast.'  
Thus spoke, nor failed such language to inspire  
New springs of fury. From his restless rest  
Sudden he started, rolling all aghast  
His eyes, with venom and blind rage infect ;  
Armed as he was, he rushed with breathless haste  
The Italian knights together to collect.

## LXIII

Them he assembled where suspended hung  
Rinaldo's well-known arms, and in the excess  
Of his unbridled, domineering tongue,  
Disgorged his fancied wrongs and bitterness :  
' What ! shall a tyrant barbarous multitude,  
That reason prize not, and no faith maintain—  
Shall they, ne'er satisfied with gold and blood,  
Our spirits bridle, and our necks enchain ?

## LXIV

' The hardships and indignities that we,  
Beneath their yoke, for seven long years have borne,  
Sufficient were to fire all Italy  
And Rome, for ages, with despite and scorn.  
I pass in silence Tancred's wrongs, and how  
His head and hand Cilicia's realm subdued,  
Thro' treason which the Frank enjoyeth now,  
And fraud usurps the prize of fortitude.

## LXV

' I pass, when time and utmost need require  
Unflinching nerve, firm purpose, ready hand,  
How thro' a thousand deaths we first aspire  
To use the sword, and bear the blazing brand ;  
And when, peace made, apportioned are the shares  
Of palms and pillage 'mid the victor bands,  
Not ours the prizes, but entirely theirs  
The fame, the gold, the honours, and the lands.

## LXVI

‘ Time was, perhaps, when such iniquities  
Had seemed most grave and monstrous in our sight.  
I pass them now as nothing, since all these  
Have through a heinous crime become most light.  
They have slain Rinaldo, thus despising even  
The laws of God, and scorning human right.  
Where are thy bolts, insulted, outraged Heaven?  
Earth, where the jaws of thy perpetual night?

## LXVII

‘ They have slain Rinaldo, our faith’s sword and shield,  
And, unrevenged, shall we sit tamely by?  
Yes, unrevenged he is, and on the field  
They have let his maimed, unburied body lie.  
Will ye that I his murderer declare?  
But ah, from whom can be concealed his name?  
For who can ignorant be what envy bear  
Godfred and Baldwin to Italian fame?

## LXVIII

‘ But why seek proofs? By yonder heaven I swear,  
And Heaven who heareth will not let me lie,  
At dawn of day I saw his ghost appear—  
An errant, hapless shade, it flitted by.  
Ah, cruel spectacle, and hard to bear!  
What frauds of Godfred doth it not premise?  
No dream it was—I saw him, and where’er  
I turn my glance, still, still, he haunts mine eyes.

## LXIX

‘ What shall we do, then ? Serve the crimson hand  
Still reeking with Rinaldo’s guiltless blood ?  
Or from hence travel to that distant land,  
Thro’ which the Euphrates rolls its golden flood,  
And thro’ a fertile plain lush plenty pours  
For the unwarlike race that lines its banks ?  
Nay, for ourselves ; for it we may make ours,  
Nor hold divided empire with the Franks.

## LXX

‘ If such your will, away ! Revenge withhold  
For the youth’s innocent, illustrious blood ;  
Tho’, if that valour, which is now so cold,  
Possessed the warmth and spirit that it should,  
This pestilential and malignant snake,  
Who thus the pride of Italy devours,  
Would by his death a good example make  
To every tyrant in this world of ours.

## LXXI

‘ I—I would, if your ancient valour dared,  
And had the will, as it still has the way,  
That his false heart, that nest of treason, shared  
Rinaldo’s fate, thro’ this my arm, to-day.’  
Thus frenzied spoke, and with his wild alarms  
And rage, infected all those standing by.  
‘ Arms, arms ! ’ he shouts, excitedly. ‘ Arms, arms ! ’  
The haughty youth to his appeal reply.

## LXXII

'Mid them, with armed right hand, Alecto burst,  
And in their breasts poured poison mixed with flame,  
Whence, passion, frenzy, and the wolf-like thirst  
For blood, more fierce and ravenous became.  
Then creeping spreads that noisome pestilence,  
Nor sated 'mid the Italian quarters stands,  
But, passing onwards, taints the Swiss, and thence  
Its venom scatters 'mid the British bands.

## LXXIII

Nor did the public loss and his hard fate  
Alone arouse the foreign legions' ire ;  
Old causes their new wrath exasperate,  
And add fresh fuel to their present fire ;  
Their dormant rancour grows regenerate ;  
The Franks, as impious tyrants, they arraign ;  
In haughty threats bursts forth, unmasked, their hate,  
Nor any longer can repressed remain.

## LXXIV

Thus water boiling in a brazen cup,  
From fire too ardent, gurgles, smokes, and roars,  
Nor can contain itself, but bubbles up  
Ev'n to the brim, o'er which it foaming pours ;  
Too few were those, enlightened by Truth's ray,  
To curb the rabble's rage, and from their post  
Tancredi and Camillus were away,  
Willam, and the chief captains of the host.

## LXXV

The infuriate legions, uncontrolled, to arms  
In crowds confused precipitately ran,  
And thunder forth war's terrible alarms  
The brazen throats of rebel trumps began.  
Meanwhile fleet messengers on Godfred call  
To arm himself : they from all quarters ride ;  
But gallant Baldwin, ready before all,  
Flew at the summons to his brother's side.

## LXXVI

Hearing the charge, to heaven he raised his eyes,  
And, as his wont, sought refuge in the Lord.  
' Oh, God ! who know'st the zeal that in me lies,  
And how by me is civil strife abhorred,  
From their benighted minds the veil remove,  
And curb the fury that transports them so ;  
And as 'tis known to thee and thine above,  
Let the blind world, that I am guiltless, know.'

## LXXVII

He ceased, and felt a strange unwonted heat  
Course thro' his veins, by Heaven itself infused,  
Whence, with firm hope and strength sublime replete,  
That made him bolder and his brow suffused,  
Girt by his friends, he straight advanced 'gainst those  
Who thought to vindicate Rinaldo's cause ;  
Nor, tho' the din of threats and arms arose,  
Did pious Godfred for a moment pause.



## LXXVIII

He had his corslet on, and was bedight  
With pomp unwonted in a princely vest ;  
Unarmed his hands and face were, and the light  
Of majesty divine was there expressed ;  
The golden sceptre of command he shook,  
And thought with that their fury to confound :  
Such he appeared to them, nor, as he spoke,  
Did his rapt voice like that of mortal's sound.

## LXXIX

‘What empty menaces are these I hear?  
Whence this vain clash of arms? Who urged you on?  
Is it thus your well-tried captain you revere?  
Is it thus from such long trial he is known,  
That there are those who Godfred would suspect,  
Of fraud accuse him, and approve it too?  
Perhaps there are among you who expect  
That I would reason, cringe, and pray to you?

## LXXX

‘Ah, Heaven forbid such base indignity  
The world, that echoes with my name, should hear  
No ; let this mace and Truth my guardians be,  
And the proud memory of my past career.  
Still justice shall to clemency give place,  
Nor on the guilty will I vengeance take ;  
Your former merits shall this crime efface,  
I pardon you for your Rinaldo's sake.

## LXXXI

‘Alone Argillan’s blood must expiate  
 The common crime ; its author he who, led  
 By lightest doubts, did others instigate  
 To the same error, and the evil spread.’  
 Flashes of honour and command appeared  
 To light his princely brow as thus he spoke,  
 So that, confounded, Argillano feared  
 The wrath (who would believe it ?) of a look.

## LXXXII

And they, so insolent and bold before,  
 Who bursting were with passion and with pride,  
 Who with such promptitude the falchion bore,  
 The spear and torch that demon wrath supplied,  
 Were speechless, hearing his imperious words,  
 Nor dared, thro’ shame and fear, look from the ground ;  
 And, tho’ protected by encircling swords,  
 They let Argillan by his guards be bound.

## LXXXIII

A lion thus, that shakes his horrid mane,  
 And thunders forth his haught defiant roar,  
 If he his former master see again

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## LXXXIV

'Tis said a wingèd warrior was seen,  
Of threatening attitude and rigid look,  
Holding a guardian shield, wherewith to screen  
The pious Godfred, while his right arm shook  
A naked sword that lightened in his hand,  
And with still fresh ensanguined blood-gouts smoked,  
The blood, perchance, of city or of land  
That had Heaven's long-enduring wrath provoked.

## LXXXV

The tumult thus appeased, all cast aside  
Their arms, and with them most their ill-intent.  
On various thoughts and projects occupied,  
Godfred returned to the imperial tent,  
Since he determined to assault the town  
Before the second or third day was spent ;  
Inspected then the beams that were cut down,  
Into war's dread machines already bent.



## CANTO IX.

### I

BUT the infernal monster who beheld  
Their stormy bosoms calm, and anger spent,  
And saw 'gainst Fate how vainly she rebelled,  
Or tried to change the changeless Mind's intent,  
Departs ; and where her shadow passes, dries  
The smiling fields, and pales the sun's pure light ;  
And for some further hellish enterprise  
Bearing fresh ills and fury, hastes her flight.

### II

She who, from the arts of her foul consorts, knew  
That the Frank camp had for the moment lost  
Bertholdo's son and Prince Tancredi too,  
With the most brave and dreaded of the host,  
Exclaimed, 'Why longer wait? Let Solyman  
Fall on them now, and strike a sudden blow.  
I hope, nay, feel most certain we should gain  
An easy triumph o'er the weakened foe.'

## III

This said, she 'mid the errant squadrons flew,  
Where, chief self-made, encamped was Solyman—  
That Solyman than whom was not, she knew,  
Of all God's rebels a more desperate one,  
Nor had been—no ; though earth again rebelled,  
And for fresh strife renewed her Titans. He  
Was the Turks' king, and in Nicæa held  
The seat supreme of his authority.

## IV

And from the Sangar to Meander spread  
His broad dominions towards the Grecian coast,  
By Mysians, Phrygians, Lydians tenanted,  
By Pontus' people and Bithynia's host ;  
But when against the Turks and their allies  
The Pilgrim armies into Asia passed,  
In general action he was worsted twice,  
His throne subverted, and his lands laid waste.

## V

Once more his fortune having vainly tried,  
And being constrained to fly, the battle lost,  
To Egypt's king for shelter he applied,  
Who proved a friendly and magnanimous host ;  
Delighted he that warrior so brave,  
Offered himself as comrade in the emprise,  
He being determined Palestine to save,  
And thwart the Christians of their sought-for prize.

## VI

But ere he openly to them declared  
The bitter war he meant to prosecute,  
He willed, with largess for that purpose spared,  
That Solyman the Arabs should recruit.  
Thus while each day his host more numerous grew,  
From Moorish tribes and Asiatic hordes,  
With ease the soldan to his standard drew  
The greedy Arabs' mercenary swords.

## VII

Whence made their captain, with his lawless host  
He overran and plundered Judah, so  
That 'twixt the Christian army and the coast  
Was barred communication to and fro ;  
And brooding o'er his wrongs and the dire fate  
Of his subverted empire, he revolved  
Within his burning breast exploits more great,  
But how to effect them, wavered, unresolved.

## VIII

To him came fierce Alecto ; as a man  
Advanced in life the infernal fiend appeared,  
'Neath whose seamed skin no genial currents ran ;  
His chin was shorn, his lip displayed a beard,  
A folded turban round his head was tied,  
An ample robe fell down his knees below,  
A scimeter hung jangling at his side,  
His back a quiver bore, his hand a bow.

## IX

‘ We,’ she exclaimed, ‘ are passing thro’ this plain  
Of sterile sands, thro’ trackless unknown ways,  
Where we can neither plunder get, nor gain  
Victory deserving of the faintest praise,  
While Godfred shakes the city, and the wall  
Has breached already with his thundering towers ;  
Yes, we shall see, if more we loiter, fall  
On it the fiery ruin of the Giaours.

## X

‘ What then—shall flocks and herds, and cabins fired,  
The exalted trophies of the soldan be ?  
Is it thus thy kingdom will be reacquired,  
And thus revenged the outrages on thee ?  
Up, up ! take heart, and in his camp surprise  
The tyrant, under covert of the night ;  
In exile trust thy Araspes, nor despise  
Counsels, that thou, when reigning, hast found right.

## XI

‘ He nor expects, nor fears us ; nay, he slights  
The timorous Arabs, naked as they are,  
Nor deems that those accustomed but to flights,  
To raids and rapine, such a feat would dare ;  
But brave they will be by thy bravery made,  
Nor fear a camp unarmed, in sleep reclined.’  
In him her burning fury she conveyed,  
As thus she spake, then mingled with the wind.

## XII

Raising his hands to heaven, the warrior spoke :

‘ Oh thou whose fury doth my own excite,  
Not man thou art, tho’ mortal be thy look ;  
Behold, I follow where thy words invite ;  
I’ll go, and mountains raise where now is plain,  
Mountains of dead and wounded I’ll erect,  
Rivers of blood I’ll make ; but ah, remain,  
And thro’ the lightless air my arms direct.’

## XIII

This said, the crowds he mustered, while his words  
The vile incited, and cheered on the slow ;  
And his example fired the Arab hordes  
With his own warmth to march against the foe.  
Then gave Alecto the trump’s signal blast,  
And the great standard with her own hands freed ;  
Marched the fleet host, nay sped, so that they passed  
The flight of Fame in their precipitate speed.

## XIV

Alecto led, then left the army, dressed  
A courier like in aspect and array,  
And at the time when Nature seems to rest,  
Divided dubious between night and day,  
Entered Jerusalem, and passing thro’  
The sad crowds, told the king, to his delight,  
Of the camp’s coming ; told their purpose, too,  
And the hour and signal of the assault by night.



## XV

The shadows now a veil of horror spread,  
Besprent and tinted of a blood-red hue ;  
The earth, in place of white hoar-frost, was red  
With reeking vapours of ensanguined dew ;  
In heaven strange prodigies and monsters soared,  
Yelled fiends malign in their exultant flight ;  
Grim Pluto emptied hell's abyss, and poured  
From gloomy Tartarus his blackest night.

## XVI

Thro' such deep horrors the fierce soldan bent  
His venturous progress toward the hostile lines ;  
But when the night had reached her mid ascent,  
From which she after rapidly declines,  
He arrived within a mile, where in their tents  
Secure the Christians slept—there made a halt,  
Refreshed his troops, and from an eminence  
Addressed and cheered them on to the assault.

## XVII

' Behold, my friends, a camp more famed than strong,  
With spoil surcharged, and surfeited with stealth,  
Which, as a ravening sea has swept along,  
And in its maw absorbed all Asia's wealth :  
This the kind fates at your disposal hold  
(Nor could the risk be from less peril free) ;  
Armour, and steeds with crimson pranked, and gold,  
Not their defence, but shall your plunder be.

## XVIII

‘Not this the host that, formerly so strong,  
O’erthrew the Persians and Nicæa won ;  
Since most in war, so varied and so long,  
Stretched on the field, their earthly race have run.  
And were it ev’n entire, in slumbers deep  
Immersed profoundly, and unarmed, it bides ;  
And small resistance can they make who sleep,  
Since short the pass that sleep from death divides.

## XIX

‘On, then ! come on ! I first the trench within,  
Over their languid forms will clear the way ;  
Let every Paynim falchion strike like mine ;  
Let each unequalled cruelty display ;  
And this very day the reign of Christ will fall,  
Become illustrious you, and Asia free.’  
Thus to their trials near he fired them all,  
And then advanced his squadrons silently.

## XX

When, lo ! before him sentinels he spies,  
Thro’ the thick shadows of uncertain light,  
And finds he cannot, as he hoped, surprise  
The prudent chief, tho’ coming in the night.  
Back they retreated, shouting loud alarms,  
By the vast numbers he conducted, scared ;  
So that, aroused, the outposts seized their arms,  
And for the fight, as best they could, prepared.

## XXI

Sure of detection now, the Arabs blew  
In their barbaric brass, whose horrent clang.  
Blent with their yells, to heaven's crystallin flew,  
And with them neighs and tramp of destriers rang ;  
Roared the tall mountains, the deep valleys roared,  
Re-echoing their roars the abyss replied ;  
Waving hell's torch aloft Alecto soared,  
And to the town the appointed sign supplied.

## XXII

On dashed the soldan now, and was the first  
To reach the guard, confused, disordered still :  
With less rapidity doth whirlwind burst,  
From out the bowels of a caverned hill ;  
River, that tears up palaces and trees,  
Lightning, that blasts with its consuming fire,  
Earthquake, that fills the world with horror,—these  
Are but faint types of his infuriate ire.

## XXIII

Ne'er falls his sword, but doth its object hit ;  
Nor fully hits, but that it woundeth too ;  
Nor wounds, but kills. More I might say of it,  
But that the simple truth might seem untrue.  
He either heeds not, or dissembles well,  
Or the dire strokes of others does not feel ;  
Tho' clangs his stricken helmet like a bell,  
And flashes horribly the smitten steel.

## XXIV

When as alone he had nigh put to flight  
The Christian outposts ; to support his schemes,  
The Arabs rushing forwards join the fight,  
Like the swoln torrent of a thousand streams.  
At this, the Franks retreat with slackened rein,  
Victor and vanquished mixed together go,  
And in disorder the entrenchments gain,  
Where all is filled with ruin, blood, and woe.

## XXV

The soldan's casque a frightful dragon decked,  
That outstretched did its scaly neck unfold ;  
With wings extended, and on claws erect,  
It in a circle had its forked tail rolled :  
Three tongues the monster darts ; a livid froth  
It vomits forth, and seems to hiss with ire ;  
And as the combat glows, it burns with wrath,  
And belches forth black smoke and lurid fire.

## XXVI

As, 'mid the flashes of a thunder-storm,  
Looks the vexed ocean in the sailor's sight,  
So dreadful shone the impious soldan's form  
To all beholders, 'mid that blaze of light.  
Some seize with dauntless hands the sword ; to flight,  
Others, base cowards, give their trembling heels ;  
Confusion is confounded by the night,  
Which multiplies the danger it conceals.

## XXVII

'Mong those whose hearts with greatest courage glowed  
Was old Latinus, on the Tiber born :  
His frame as yet no sign of weakness showed,  
Nor was by failing years or toil outworn.  
Five gallant sons, his like, alongside him,  
Whene'er he went to battle, kept their places,  
Loading with armour, long before their time,  
Their limbs still growing, and their beardless faces ;

## XXVIII

And by example of their sire inflamed,  
Their swords and anger sharpened had for blood.  
'Come boys, where yon Unfaithful,' he exclaimed,  
'Pursues our friends in such exulting mood ;  
Nor let the carnage he creates restrain  
The daring spirit ye have always borne :  
For they, my sons, but worthless honour gain,  
Unless past horrors the emprise adorn.'

## XXIX

Thus her young cubs bloodthirsty lioness  
To rapine leads, and peril o'er the plains,  
Ere nature's arms their horrid jaws possess,  
Ere cruel claws they have, or shaggy manes :  
She, by her own, inflames their savage moods  
Against the hunter, who imperiously  
Disturbs the quiet of their native woods,  
Making from thence their weaker tenants fly.

## XXX

The imprudent five accompany their sire,  
And linked together, Solyman assail,  
When, in a single moment, one desire,  
One thought almost doth six long spears impel ;  
But far too bold the eldest, undismayed,  
Flings down his lance, and closes with his foe,  
And tries, but vainly, with his trenchant blade  
To lay the soldan's powerful charger low.

## XXXI

But, as a storm-bound cliff, which proudly soars  
O'er the vexed ocean that beneath it raves,  
Firm in itself sustains the rage that pours  
From angered heaven, the thunder, and the waves ;  
So his audacious front preserved that Brave  
Unmoved against the swords, against the spears,  
And of the youth who struck his charger, gave  
The skull between the eyebrows and the ears.

## XXXII

Fond Amaranté, with compassionate ruth,  
Flew to support his brother, thus struck down ;  
But idle was the pity of the youth,  
That added to another's death his own,  
Since on his arm down fell the Pagan's sword,  
And sent the pair conjoined to early death.  
Prostrate they sank, and on each other poured  
Their blood, commingled with their parting breath.

## XXXIII

Then having cut Sabino's lance in two,  
Which from afar had galled him, in pursuit  
Of the rash boy he pricked his destrier, who  
Caught him, struck down, and trampled under foot ;  
From his young frame the struggling spirit flies  
With many a pang, thus prematurely torn  
From life's sweet-smelling gales and halcyon skies,  
And the gay golden prime of boyhood's morn.

## XXXIV

Still living Pico and Laurenté were,  
Who, twin-born, made their father doubly rich,  
And often caused (so like the youthful pair)  
A pleasing error as to which was which ;  
But if fair Nature made this couple one,  
A hard disunion hostile fury made :  
This through the bosom the fierce soldan run,  
That in the dust a headless carcase laid.

## XXXV

The wretched father (father now no more,  
Since of so many sons at once deprived !)  
In their five deaths beheld his own ; that hour  
Robbed him of all, no scion now survived.  
Nor know I how, amid such agony,  
Old age could breathe, much less still battle on  
Against such odds ; perhaps he did not see  
The look and struggles of each dying son ;

## XXXVI

Perhaps that bitter pang the friendly night  
Concealed in mercy from the old man's view ;  
Still him no hard-earned triumph could requite :  
His sons had perished ; he would perish too.  
Of his own blood hence lavish grew the sire,  
And madly coveted his foe's to drain ;  
Nor know I which was greater, his desire  
To slay the soldan, or himself be slain.

## XXXVII

At length he shouted out : ' Is, then, so frail  
This arm of mine that you despise its stroke ?  
That ev'n its greatest efforts can't avail  
'Gainst me your innate fierceness to provoke ?'  
This said, he dealt him a terrific blow  
That through chain armour and steel corslet tore,  
A wound inflicting on his haughty foe,  
From which outspurred streams of tepid gore.

## XXXVIII

His sword and ire the fell barbarian steeled  
Against Latinus at that cry, that wound ;  
And pierced his hauberk, having pierced his shield,  
Tho' it with toughest hide was seven times bound,  
Then in his bowels plunged his vengeful sword,  
The wretched father gave one gasp and died,  
While now from mouth and now from wound outpoured  
In flow alternate an ensanguined tide.



## XXXIX

As in the Apennines an oak, whose strength  
Long scorned the war of north and eastern breeze,  
Uprooted by unusual storm at length,  
Drags in one common wreck the neighbouring trees ;  
So fell Latinus, and so furious was,  
That with him he dragged numbers to the ground.  
Fit end, that one so violent should cause,  
Ev'n dying, ruinous destruction round.

## XL

While thus exhaling his internal hate,  
On blood the soldan sated his long fast ;  
The Arabs, as their chief exasperate,  
Into sad plight the Christian warriors cast ;  
Henry, the English knight, and Olopherne,  
Fell 'neath thy hand, Dragutes ; Ariadine  
Did Gilbert and bold Philip overturn  
And put to death, both born upon the Rhine.

## XLI

Ernesto fell beneath Albazar's mace,  
Engerlan 'neath the sword of Algazel ;  
But who could note each death's peculiar case,  
Or count the ignoble multitudes that fell ?  
At the first barbarous yells Prince Godfred woke,  
Nor from that moment had remained supine ;  
Already armed, a powerful force he took,  
And at their head led on the impatient line.

## XLII

When to their yells he heard the din, that grew  
Each moment louder, he at once surmised  
That, to their black perfidious nature true,  
The Arab robbers had the camp surprised;  
For, well-informed, the cautious captain knew  
They were marauding round the neighbouring lands,  
Still scarcely deemed that such a rabble crew  
Would venture to attack his regular bands.

## XLIII

Meanwhile he hears, as further on he goes,  
'To arms!' from the other side—'To arms!' reply,  
At the same time that barbarous howls arose  
In most unearthly discord to the sky.  
This was Clorinda, who the king's own guard  
Led to the assault, Arganté at her side;  
Whence, turning round to noble Guelph, who warred  
As his lieutenant, the commander cried:

## XLIV

'Hark! hark! how from the city and the hill  
Swell the fresh blasts of clanging battle; there  
Is need of all thy valour and thy skill  
The first fierce onset of the foe to bear.  
Fly, then, at once, and for all risks provide,  
Part of my force can follow in thy train;  
Meanwhile I will, upon the other side,  
With the other part the hostile shock sustain.'

## XLV

This settled, equal Fortune led the pair  
Of noble warriors by a diverse path ;  
Guelph to the hill advanced, the captain where  
The Arab now no opposition hath ;  
But he, acquiring, as he goes, fresh strength,  
At every step increasing numbers gained,  
Till, grown a powerful host, he reached at length  
The spot where Solyman destruction rained.

## XLVI

Thus from his native hills, in gentle course,  
The Po descends, nor fills his narrow bed,  
But greater grows the farther from his source,  
Till, proudly teeming, by fresh torrents fed,  
O'er the burst banks his bull-like brow he rears,  
O'ercoming all resistance in his sweep ;  
And Adria's billows butting back, appears  
To carry war, not tribute to the deep.

## XLVII

Where'er his flying troops caught Godfred's eye,  
Thither to rally them, he rode apace,  
Shouting : ' What fear is this ? ah, whither fly ?  
At least see who it is that gives you chase ;  
A rabble herd pursues, that knows not how  
To give or take a blow upon the face ;  
Alone the lightning of your looks would cow  
(If but against them turned) that craven race.'

## XLVIII

This said, he pricked his steed, and galloped where  
Round him the soldan fiery ruin spread,  
Cutting his way through many a bristling square,  
Thro' carnage, dust, and mountains of the dead ;  
Nor failed his sword and steed which he bestrode  
A passage through their closest ranks to force ;  
Down, down to earth on either side he mowed  
Armed men and arms, the horseman and the horse !

## XLIX

On, on his destrier bounded, vault on vault,  
O'er piled up mounds of slaughtered Saracens ;  
The intrepid soldan, who the fierce assault  
Perceived approaching, flies not nor declines,  
But gallops forward, and prepared to smite  
Draws near, uplifting his red sword on high ;  
O what two cavaliers the fates unite,  
From earth's antipodes their strength to try !

## L

In narrow lists 'gainst Valour Fury fights  
For Asia's empire ; but what tongue can tell  
How desperate was the encounter of those knights,  
Or say how swift and strong their falchions fell ?  
I pass untold the horrors that were done,  
Screened as they were by dark invidious night,  
Tho' worthy they of noontide's brightest sun,  
And that a world were witness of the sight.

## LI

The Christians following their intrepid guide,  
Imbibe his spirit and dash boldly on,  
And a dense squadron of his best armed ride  
Around the homicidal Solyman.  
Nor more the Faithful than the Infidel,  
Nor more of those than these bedewed the plain ;  
Alike the victors and the vanquished fell,  
They slew in equal numbers and were slain.

## LII

As with like strength and rage, in stubborn fray,  
The south wind here, there blustering Boreas blows,  
Nor will they give unto each other way,  
But cloud to cloud and wave to wave oppose.  
So was beheld that fierce and obstinate fight,  
Where neither side would bend, and neither yield;  
They clash in rancorous hatred and despite,  
'Gainst helmet, shield and sword—sword, helm and shield.

## LIII

Nor less upon the other side was dense  
The array of troops, or fierce the combat ; there  
A thousand clouds of hell's belligerents  
Entirely filled the spacious fields of air,  
And gave such courage to the Infidel,  
That there were none who meditate retreat ;  
Arganté burned beneath the torch of hell,  
Nor wanted that to inflame his native heat.

## LIV

He had driven back the vanguard of the Cross,  
And entered the entrenchments at a vault,  
And filled with lacerated limbs the fosse,  
To make an easier path for the assault ;  
So that the others followed him, and dyed  
The tents they encountered first vermilion red.  
Clorinda kept her station at his side,  
Or little after, scorning to be led.

## LV

The Franks were now in flight, when to their aid  
Prince Guelpho galloped with his gallant band ;  
Change front at once the fugitives he made,  
The enfeebled Arabs' fury to withstand.  
Thus raged the battle : blood in rivers flowed,  
As much on one as on the other side,  
When heaven's Great King from His sublime abode  
His eyes cast down, and the fierce fight descried.

## LVI

There dwelleth He who, good and just, from there  
Gives laws to all, all makes and ornaments  
Above the confines of this narrow sphere,  
Beyond dull reason's reach or mortal's sense ;  
And on Eternity's majestic seat,  
Resplendent shines, three several lights in one.  
Nature and Fate crouch humbly at His feet,  
Motion, and He who counts the moments gone,

## LVII

And Space, and She, who at His slightest nod,  
Whirls and destroys as dust or lightest air  
Gold, empires, earthly glory ; and as God  
Disdains for anger of vain man to care,  
There with such radiant splendour is He crowned,  
That dazzled are the purest in his sight ;  
His throne unnumbered Seraphim surround,  
Whom equal joys unequally requite.

## LVIII

Now as resounding through the heavenly halls  
Rings the full concord of their strains divine,  
The King of kings the archangel Michael calls,  
Whose arms of lucent diamond brightly shine ;  
' Perceiv'st thou not how hell's foul fiends,' He said,  
' 'Gainst my dear faithful flock their arms have hurled,  
And from the low abysses of the dead,  
Have upwards risen to disturb the world ?

## LIX

' Go, tell them henceforth to give up the care  
Of war to warriors as is fair and right,  
Nor spread disturbance, nor pollute the air  
Of earth below, nor heaven's pure regions blight ;  
Let them return to their just punishment,  
And Acheron's gloom, their fit abode, regain,  
And there themselves and all lost souls torment ;  
Thus have I 'stablished, thus I now ordain.'

## LX

The winged archangel at these words inclined  
Low at His feet divine, with reverence fraught,  
Then spread his golden pinions to the wind,  
So rapid they as to exceed all thought.  
The fire he passed and realms of light where dwelled  
The blest in their immovable abode,  
Next the crystallin and pure cirque beheld,  
That rolling round, with stars unnumbered glowed.

## LXI

Now on the left saw Jove and Saturn roll,  
Differing in motion and distinct in sight,  
And the others that can't deviate from their goal,  
Since moved and quickened by celestial might ;  
Then passed from cloudless realms of endless day,  
Shining and bright, whence thunder falls and rain,  
To where the world now feeds and melts away,  
Dies in its struggles now—now lives again ;

## LXII

And came dividing with immortal plume  
The darkness dense and dreariness profound,  
Gilding with light divine the horrid gloom ;  
Light which his face in sparks diffused around ;  
Thus after showers of rain the god of day,  
The humid clouds with sheen prismatic dyes ;  
So cleaves a shooting star the liquid way,  
And on earth's lap, falls headlong from the skies.



## LXIII

But when arrived where hell's accursed crew  
To the Turks' rage fresh stimulants applied,  
He sudden stopped, ev'n as in air he flew,  
Brandished his lance, and thus indignant cried :  
'What ! have ye still to learn how terribly  
God hurls His bolts? What ! 'gainst His sovran Will,  
Tho' racked by pangs of extreme misery,  
Live ye still hardened and rebellious still?

## LXIV

'Tis fixed in Heaven that at the Cross's sign,  
Sion shall bow her walls and ope her gates :  
Why then provoke the Almighty's wrath divine,  
Why any longer battle with the Fates ?  
Begone, accursed, to your dark realm—begone,  
To pains and death in perpetuity,  
And in those regions which are all your own,  
Your future battles and your triumphs be.

## LXV

'Go, vent your cruelty in hell beneath ;  
There the damned torture with your deadliest pains,  
'Mid shrieks eternal, and the gnash of teeth,  
The clash of iron, and of clanking chains.'  
This said, he drove out with his fatal lance  
Those whom he saw reluctant to take flight  
With many a groan, they left the fair expanse  
Of golden stars and everlasting light,

## LXVI

And spread their wings towards hell's eternal night,  
The damned to harry with fresh tortures. Ne'er  
Passes the sea of birds so great a flight,  
When gathering they to warmer climes repair ;  
Nor on the ground so many leaves to fall  
At the first cold of autumn's frosts are seen.  
The world, delivered from their baneful thrall,  
Her gloomy look casts off, and smiles again.

## LXVII

Yet not for this his courage and his ire,  
In the fierce bosom of Arganté sank,  
Altho' no more Alecto breathed her fire,  
Or with her scourge infernal lashed his flank.  
His ruthless steel he whirled where'er the crowd  
Of Franks was thickest, and with equal blow  
Mowed down both great and small, and the most proud  
And lofty heads laid level with the low.

## LXVIII

Not far Clorinda is, nor seemeth less  
With severed limbs to strew that scene of strife :  
Berlinger's breast she pierced with rare address  
Right to the heart—abode of fragile life,  
And drove the blade so home, that all imbued  
With goutts of gore, it issued from his back ;  
Next Albin struck where first the child takes food ;  
Cleft Gallo's face, nor paused in her attack ;

## LXIX

But Gernier's hand, that erst herself did wound,  
Lopped from his arm, cast bleeding on the plain,  
The trembling fingers quivered on the ground,  
And struggled still the falchion to retain:  
Like tail of serpent that attempts in vain,  
When from its body severed, to unite.  
Disabled thus she left him, and amain  
Turned on Achilles, and with all her might,

## LXX

Planted between his nape and neck a blow,  
Which the nerves cutting thro', the windpipe tore,  
Whence circling round, the head fell down below,  
The face begriming with foul dust, before  
The trunk itself had fallen, which still remained  
Firm in its seat (heart-rending spectacle !)  
Until, no longer by the curb restrained,  
The destrier plunging flung it from the selle.

## LXXI

While thus the fierce undaunted amazon  
Broke thro', and scourged the squadrons of the West,  
Her troops in equal numbers overthrown,  
The strength of haught Gildippe's arm confessed.  
Alike the spirit, as their sex the same,  
That either maiden's valorous bosom nerved ;  
But to make proof thereof's not granted them,  
Since for a mightier foe by Fate reserved.

## LXXII

Here one, there the other charged, yet neither fair  
The serried ranks of her opponents broke ;  
At this Prince Guelpho, with drawn scimeter,  
Approached Clorinda, and a sweeping stroke  
Let drive, and stained somewhat the thirsty blade  
In her fair flank. To his abrupt attack  
One savage thrust she in rejoinder made,  
And 'twixt his ribs the injury paid back.

## LXXIII

Guelph struck again, but failed in his intent,  
Since there by chance Osmida, passing by,  
Received the blow for fair Clorinda meant,  
And which his forehead gashed from eye to eye.  
But numbers now of those whom Guelpho led,  
Collecting quickly to his succour flew ;  
Thither too masses of the Pagans sped,  
Whence more tumultuous the contest grew.

## LXXIV

Her purple brow already had the dawn  
From heaven's imperial balcony displayed,  
When, 'mid those tumults from his bonds withdrawn,  
Himself had furious Argillano freed ;  
And having round him in his hurry thrown  
The arms that first chance offered to his view,  
He came for recent errors to atone  
By new achievements, and by honours new.

## LXXV

As from imperial stalls a generous steed,  
There kept for purposes of war, repairs,  
Scouring the country round, to seek, now freed,  
The well-known stream, the pastures, and the mares,  
Aloft, exulting, his haught crest he throws,  
O'er which his mane in folds luxuriant plays ;  
Earth rings beneath his tramp—he snorts, he glows,  
And fills the welkin with sonorous neighs ;

## LXXVI

Such came Argillan ; so he tossed his head,  
So burned his glance, and with a step so fleet,  
He bounding forward to the battle sped,  
As scarce to imprint the dust beneath his feet ;  
The foe addressing with the indifference  
Of one that dareth all and heedeth nought :  
' Dregs of the world ! vile inept Arabs ! whence  
Have ye so much unusual courage caught ?

## LXXVII

' To bear the shield, or helmet's weight unfit,  
Or back or breast with armour to enclose,  
Half naked and affrighted, ye commit  
To speed your safety, to the wind your blows ;  
By aid of night are your achievements done,  
Courage alone in darkness you acquire.  
Where is your refuge, now that she is gone ?  
Arms and more solid valour you require.'

## LXXVIII

Ere he had finished, Algazel he smote  
Upon the neck with such severity,  
That the fell scimeter transfixed his throat,  
And quashed the word just rising in reply.  
A sudden horror veiled the wretch's eyes,  
An icy coldness ran through every vein ;  
He falls, and, filled with fury, as he dies,  
Malign, spiteful, bites the odious plain.

## LXXIX

He then by various modes did Saladin,  
And Agricolt, and Muleasses kill,  
And with one stroke divided to the chine  
One who stood near, by name Aldiazil.  
Piercing his breast, he struck down Ariadine,  
And did his fall with bitter taunts deride ;  
He, looking up, while on the ground supine,  
Thus to his haught, contemptuous words replied :

## LXXX

' Not thou, whoe'er thou art, shalt triumph long  
In this my death ; proud conqueror, for thee  
Like fate is preordained ; an arm more strong  
Shall stretch thy lifeless carcass beside me.'  
Grimly he smiled, and answered him : ' Let God  
Care for my lot ; meanwhile die thou, and feast  
The dogs and birds ;' then on his body trod,  
And with one tug, both steel and soul released.

## LXXXI

Among the archers and the lancers rode  
One of the pages of King Solyman,  
On whose smooth chin no indication showed  
That spring to strew its first flowers had begun ;  
The sweat that moistened his soft cheeks was fair  
As glistening dew-drops or bright pearls ; fresh grace  
The dust imparted to his unkempt hair,  
And anger ev'n looked charming in that face.

## LXXXII

The graceful stripling rode a destrier, white  
As snow fresh fallen upon the Apennines ;  
Less swift is whirlwind, rising flame less light,  
Than it to wheel and curvet through the lines :  
Grasped by the middle, he a javelin bore,  
A scimeter hung jangling at his side ;  
Tunic of purple, gold-inwove, he wore,  
That shone resplendent with barbaric pride.

## LXXXIII

While the young boy, whose heart the new delights  
Of glory charmed, endeavoured to molest,  
By dashing in among them, the Frank knights,  
Nor was there any could his course arrest,  
Argillan watched his opportunity  
To launch his spear, as round and round he flies—  
Caught it, and slew his destrier stealthily,  
And o'er him stood, before he had time to rise,

## LXXXIV

And 'gainst his suppliant face, which vainly strove  
Itself with arms of pity to defend,  
The inexorable steel Argillan drove  
The choicest gift of Nature to offend ;  
But the sword seemed more human than the man,  
Since, turning, it fell flat ; but what availed  
The sabre's ruth, since with fresh force he ran  
Him thro' the place where he at first had failed ?

## LXXXV

But Solymano, who, not far from there  
Engaged in battle had with Godfred been,  
Forsook the fight, and turned his destrier,  
Soon as he had his page's peril seen,  
And quickly oped thro' closest crowds a lane,  
For vengeance—yes, but for assistance—no,  
Since he beheld—ah, grief !—his Lesbin slain,  
Like a fair flower in bloom of youth laid low.

## LXXXVI

So gently did his trembling eyelids close,  
And droop so gracefully his neck, the youth  
So well became his pallor, and the throes  
Of death inspired such sympathetic ruth,  
That his heart melts, than marble erst more cold,  
And, 'mid his anger, scalding tear-drops rise :  
What ! weep'st thou, Solyman, that didst behold  
Thy realm's destruction with unmoistened eyes ?



## LXXXVII

But when he saw the sabre smoking still  
With the youth's blood, all pity disappears,  
And seethed and burned his maddened anger, till  
It dried the very sources of his tears ;  
He on Argillan rushed with sword on high,  
And cleft opposing shield, helm, head, and throat.  
Of Solymano's animosity  
That mighty blow did well the strength denote.

## LXXXVIII

Nor yet content, upon the inanimate corse  
He sought, dismounted, to do battle ; so  
A mastiff seizes with enfeloned force  
The unconscious stone that gave the cruel blow.  
Of overpowering dole vain vain relief,  
To wreak one's vengeance on insensate clay !  
Meanwhile not thus the gallant Christian chief  
His blows and anger idly threw away.

## LXXXIX

Sheathed in chain armour, iron helm, and shield,  
With Solyman a thousand Turks campaigned,  
Who to fatigue were never known to yield,  
Of dauntless courage and in all points trained ;  
The remnant of his ancient guard they were,  
That in the deserts of wild Araby  
Did aye their liege's hapless fortunes share,  
And still were faithful in adversity.

## XC

These in close order linked together, yield  
Little or nothing to the valorous Frank ;  
Among them Godfred charged, and through his shield,  
Pierced fell Corcuté's face and Rosten's flank ;  
Then from the shoulders severed Selim's head,  
And shore Rossano's right and left arm thro' ;  
Nor these alone beneath his sabre bled,  
Elseways he many maimed and many slew.

## XCI

But while he thus attacked the infidel,  
And bore the fury of their slashing swords,  
And in no single point desponding fell  
The hopes and fortunes of the barbarous hordes,  
Lo ! a fresh cloud of ominous dust draws nigh,  
Big with the rattling thunderbolts of war ;  
From gleaming arms, lo ! sudden flashes fly,  
That panic strike the Saracen. They are

## XCII

Fifty Crusaders, that, in silver clad,  
Display the purple and triumphant Cross ;  
Not if a hundred mouths and tongues I had,  
And lungs of iron and an iron voice,  
Could I recount the numbers that were slain  
By the first charge of that impetuous troop :  
The unwarlike Arab falls, the Turk in vain  
Resists, and sinks beneath their lightning swoop.

## XCIII

Horror, affright, despair, and cruelty  
Stalk round the battle-field ; in varied guise,  
Triumphant Death in every part you see,  
And lakes of blood, in crimson billows, rise.  
As tho' presaging failure, with his train  
The king already had passed thro' the gate,  
And from a height beheld the subject plain,  
Where battle trembled in the scales of Fate.

## XCIV

But when he saw the main force wavering, he  
Sounds the recall, and from the direful wrack  
Commands, with iterated urgency,  
Arganté and Clorinda to fall back.  
At first the savage couple disobeyed,  
Blinded with rage, and drunk and mad with ire ;  
At last they yielded, but too late essayed  
To make the troops more orderly retire.

## XCV

For who can rule a crowd, or govern fright,  
Or give faint-hearted cowards confidence ?  
They fling away their arms and take to flight ;  
The sword is now a burden, not defence.  
From west to south extends a rugged vale  
Between the town and camp ; to this they fly,  
While, towards the walls, borne onwards by the gale,  
Black clouds of dust obscure the azure sky.

## XCVI

As down the steep they rushed, upon their rear  
The Christians hanging, frightful carnage made,  
But afterwards, when mounting, they were near,  
And had received the barbarous tyrant's aid,  
Guelph, at such disadvantage, would not run  
The risk of forcing the precipitous height,  
And checked his troops ; the king withdrew his own,  
No small remains of that disastrous fight.

## XCVII

Meanwhile, the soldan had done all Heaven grants  
To strength of mortal man ; he can no more.  
His flanks upheave, as out of breath he pants,  
And down his face run streams of sweat and gore ;  
'Neath the shield's weight declines his languid arm ;  
The sluggish steel can no effect produce ;  
It breaks, but cuts not—blunt, it does no harm ;  
The sabre now has lost a sabre's use.

## XCVIII

And feeling this, he ponders in the act  
Of one that 'twixt two projects doubtful stands ;  
Whether to die, and of that glorious fact  
Rob others by his suicidal hands ;  
Or, if surviving this disaster, wait,  
And place his person in security.  
At length he cried, ' To thee I yield me, Fate !  
Let this my flight sign of thy triumph be.

## XCIX

‘ Let the foe see my back, and again spurn  
Our exile now, provided that again  
He live to see me, armed anew, return  
To vex his peace and never ’stablished reign.  
I yield not, no ; but as my injuries  
Undying are, so my despite shall be ;  
Tho’ die this flesh, my fleshless ghost shall rise  
From out the grave, still deadlier enemy.’



cut

upon the plain  
errant course :  
re rein,  
on the horse.  
so fiercely rose  
and base ;  
er shows  
ghtest trace.

If a wolf  
the sheltering wood,  
greedy gulf  
for blood  
d tongue out,  
ks off the gore ;  
oodly rout,  
ovetous for more.

## III

Escaping, as by Providence ordained,  
The clouds of arrows that around him flew,  
From swords, and spears, and instruments that rained  
Destruction round, in safety he withdrew.  
Then, wandering on, unheeded and unknown,  
The tracks most wild and unfrequented sought,  
Revolving what was wisest to be done,  
In a fierce tempest of distracting thought.

## IV

At length he fixed to go where Egypt's king  
His mighty host assembles, and unite  
With him his arms, and their leagued forces bring  
To try the fortune of another fight.  
Resolved on this, he makes no vain delay,  
But thither by the shortest road proceeds ;  
Nor needeth guide, since he well knows the way  
That to the coast of antique Gaza leads.

## V

Nor, tho' his wounds torment him, and the blows  
Dealt so severely in the late affray,  
Will he his armour doff, or seek repose,  
But in sore travail spends the livelong day.  
At length, when night earth's various colours took,  
And all converted into one black suit,  
Dismounting, he bound up his wounds, and shook  
From a high palm, as best he could, the fruit.

## VI

Refreshed therefrom, upon the naked field  
His jaded limbs to accommodate he sought,  
And his head pillowed on his iron shield,  
To calm the throbbings of o'erwearied thought.  
But, as each moment passed, still more and more  
He felt his wounds' uneasiness and pain ;  
Gnawed is his bosom, rent his heart's proud core,  
By the inward vultures, sorrow and disdain.

## VII

At length, when buried in Cimmerian gloom  
Of deepest night, all things were calm around,  
And he too, by exhaustion overcome,  
In Lethe had his carking troubles drowned,  
And, in a brief and fitful sleep, composed  
His heavy limbs and eyes,—in tones severe  
A voice, even while the wearied warrior dozed  
And caught some rest, thus thundered in his ear :

## VIII

' O Solymano, for a happier hour  
And fitter time, thy slothful slumbers save,  
Since, 'neath the yoke of the accursed Giaour,  
The land, once ruled by thee, is still a slave.  
Canst on this earth repose thy sluggard head,  
While here such marks of thy disgrace remain ?  
While blanch the bones of thy unburied dead,  
Canst idly wait till morn return again ?'



## IX

Awaked, the soldan lifts his eyes, and sees  
One with appearance of extreme old age,  
With a curved staff support his tottering knees  
And guide his steps, and asks him in his rage :  
'What wantest here? and tell me who art thou,  
Intrusive spirit, that has dared to break  
The brief repose of travellers? and how  
Can my revenge or shame thy interest wake?'

## X

'I,' said the hoary sage, 'am one, to whom  
Is known, at least in part, thy new design ;  
And, as a friend more careful of thee, come,  
Than in thy ignorance thou mayst opine.  
Nor idle are the biting truths I preach,  
Since wrath is valour's whetstone ; whence, good sir,  
Kindly receive these words, and let my speech  
Act on thy ready heart as whip and spur.

## XI

'As, then, thy steps, if I judge right, are bent  
Toward Egypt's mighty monarch, I forebode  
A rough and useless journey, if intent,  
Thou still persistest to pursue that road.  
The Saracens, ev'n if thou shouldst not go,  
Will soon collect, and march to their allies ;  
Nor place is there, where to employ or show  
Thy valour 'gainst our common enemies.

## XII

‘ But if thou’lt follow me, I pledge my word  
To lead thee safely, in the broad day light  
(Nor wilt thou have occasion for thy sword),  
Within those walls, now girt by Latin might ;  
There thou mayst reap the glory and delight  
Of struggles ’gainst discomforts and the Giaours,  
And Salem hold till, to renew the fight,  
The Egyptian army joins its force with ours.’

## XIII

The Turk could not, though angry, fail to admire  
The old man’s eyes and voice, as thus he spoke,  
And cast away all trace of pride and ire  
From his intolerant thoughts and savage look.  
‘ Ready,’ he said, ‘ to follow thy behest  
Am I, O father, nor will e’er recoil ;  
And that advice to me will seem the best  
Which greatest risks combines with greatest toil.’

## XIV

The sage approved ; and since his wounds were chilled  
By the night breeze, which rankled them still more,  
In them a sovran balsam he instilled,  
To staunch the blood, and his lost strength restore ;  
When, seeing Apollo light with gold the roses,  
Already blushing from Aurora’s hues :  
‘ ’Tis time to leave ; the sun our path discloses,  
And the world calls to its diurnal dues.’

## XV

To his chariot, then, which waited his command,  
He with the fierce Nicæan straight proceeds ;  
Mounts, slacks the reins, and with a master hand  
Lashes alternately the snorting steeds,  
Who fly so swiftly that the dusty plain  
No trace preserves of hoof or glowing wheel.  
Away, away !—they smoke, they pant, they strain,  
Blanching with flecks of foam the burnished steel.

## XVI

I will tell marvels : The surrounding air  
Was gathered and embodied in a shroud,  
Veiling the enchanted chariot, altho' there  
Appeared not ev'n the vestige of a cloud ;  
Yet rocks could not have pierced its density,  
When launched from war's most powerful machine ;  
Still from its deep recess they both could see  
Around the cloud, beyond the sky serene.

## XVII

The warrior gazed in mute bewilderment,  
With brow contracted and uplifted eye,  
At cloud and car, which all impediment  
So swiftly passed that they appeared to fly.  
The sage, who, by his fixed, yet vacant stare,  
Perceived his stupor, the dead silence broke,  
Calling the prince from his abstracted air,  
Who with an effort roused himself, and spoke :

## XVIII

‘Whoe’er thou art, that, passing mortal skill,  
To strange unearthly use doth Nature bind,  
And, secrets scanning, rangest at thy will  
Thro’ the most dark recesses of the mind ;  
If, with the knowledge that thy God bestows,  
Thou canst things hidden and remote foresee,  
Ah, tell me, pray, amid her mighty throes,  
Is peace or ruin Asia’s destiny ?

## XIX

‘But first reveal thy name, and by what art  
Thou doest things that mortal powers transcend ;  
But if this stupor does not first depart,  
How to thy other words can I attend ?’  
The old man smiled : ‘In one part not at all  
’Tis hard to gratify thy wish. I am hight  
Ismeno, and the Syrian people call  
Me wizard, since those arts are my delight.

## XX

‘But to unveil the future, and unfold  
The eternal records of hid Destiny,  
Is aim too lofty and desire too bold,  
Nor is such granted to mortality ;  
To face misfortune and contend ’gainst wrong,  
Let each employ his head and hands, since not  
Unoft it happens that the wise and strong  
Carve for themselves the best and happiest lot.



## XXI

‘Thy unconquered arm (to which it easy were  
To shake the straggling forces of the West,  
Much more to guard the strong position where  
Their ruthless legions Salem’s walls invest)  
Prepare ’gainst fire—prepare, I say, ’gainst arms  
Dare, suffer, trust—my hope is great ; but thee  
I now will tell what should possess great charms,  
And which, obscurely, as thro’ clouds I see.

## XXII

‘I see, or seem to see, before me borne,  
Ere yonder sun thro’ many lustres roll,  
One that will Asia with bright deeds adorn,  
And fruitful Egypt ’neath his sway control.  
I pass in silence, since I scarce can see,  
The charms of peaceful arts and leisure hours,  
And all his virtues ; but enough for thee  
That he’ll not only shake the Christian powers,

## XXIII

‘But, in his last proud triumph, from its base  
Will hurl the fabric of their rule unjust,  
And the sad remnant to a narrow place,  
Alone defended by the ocean, thrust.  
He of thy blood will be.’ Here ceased the sage,  
And the other said : ‘O happy, whom Fate’s voice  
Selects for such a glorious heritage’—  
And tho’ he envies, inly doth rejoice.

## XXIV

Adding : ' Let Fortune change, or good or ill,  
As is predestined by divine decree,  
No power has she to thwart my resolute will,  
Nor me, shall ever but undaunted, see ;  
The moon and stars shall first their course forsake  
Ere I one step from what is just and right  
Swerve in the least.' As thus the soldan spake,  
His eye-balls flashed with more than mortal light.

## XXV

Thus on they went conversing, till they were  
Nigh where they saw the Frank pavilions rise.  
Ah, cruel spectacle, and hard to bear !  
Ah, in what various forms Death met their eyes !  
With gloom and anger the fierce soldan's swelled ;  
His face grew woe-begone, as, deeply sighing,  
In abject degradation he beheld  
Upon the ground his once-feared standards lying,

## XXVI

And scouring o'er it, Franks, exulting, tread  
Upon the face and breast of some known friend,  
And scornfully from the unburied dead  
Their armour and ill-fated vestments rend ;  
O'er their departed comrades some convene  
To pay the last sad rites—some carry fire—  
And here an intermingled crowd is seen  
Of Turks and Arabs feed one common pyre.

## XXVII

Deeply he sighed, and, burning for the attack,  
Sprang from the chariot with uplifted blade ;  
But the old wizard caught and drew him back,  
And, having chid his mad resolve, and made  
Him mount the car again, his course inclined  
To where the mountain rears its lofty flanks.  
Thus for a time they journeyed, till behind  
They left the entire encampment of the Franks.

## XXVIII

They then alighted from the magic car,  
Which vanished ; but, still screened beneath the veil  
Of the same cloud, on foot the adventurous pair  
Leftwards descended thro' a lonely vale,  
Until they reached a spot where, towards the west, (7)  
Majestic Sion turns her shoulders ; here  
The wizard halted, and, as if in quest  
Of something hid, the beetling steep drew near.

## XXIX

In the hard rock a hollow cavern oped,  
Wrought in the mountain centuries before ;  
But from disuse the aperture was stopped  
By briars and brambles which concealed the door.  
The wizard cleared the way, and, stooping low,  
With body suited to the passage, tried,  
One hand being pilot, through the pass to go,  
And to the prince the other gave as guide.

## XXX

Outspake the soldan then : ' What ! thither grope ?  
What end can this thy furtive path afford ?  
Other, it may be, better I could ope,  
By thy permission, with my trusty sword.'  
' Disdain not thou, fastidious soul,' he said,  
' Brave tho' thou be, to pass these darksome ways;  
Since mighty Herod here was wont to tread,  
Whose feats in arms are still the theme of praise.

## XXXI

' The king of whom I speak this cavern framed,  
When the unruly Jews he would restrain,  
And thro' it, by that lofty turret, named,  
From his great friend, Antonia, he could gain  
A secure entrance, visible to none,  
Into the massive venerable fane ;  
From thence escape in secret from the town,  
Lead squadrons out and bring them back again.

## XXXII

' But to myself, alone of living men,  
This dark and solitary path is known ;  
We will pass through its secret windings then,  
To where the king has gathered round his throne  
His wisest councillors. He seems to fear,  
More than perhaps he should, the frowns of fate ;  
Much needed wilt thou come. In silence hear,  
Then, at the fitting time—expostulate.'



## XXXIII

With his huge frame, as thus he spoke, the knight  
Blocked up the low-roofed cave, and fearless sped  
Thro' paths obscured by never-ending night,  
Following the wizard wheresoe'er he led.  
At first they stooped, but as the little grot  
Expanded more the farther they went on,  
They mounted with facility and got  
To the dark cavern's centre ; whereupon

## XXXIV

Ismeno straightway opened a small gate,  
And they climbed up a rarely trodden stair,  
Whose only light proceeded from a grate  
Thro' which stole glimmerings of lack-lustre air ;  
At length they reached a cloister underground ;  
Thence onward passed into a hall of state,  
Where, with his sceptre and with diadem crowned,  
'Mid his sad council the sad monarch sat.

## XXXV

Hid in the cloud, the Turk, himself unseen,  
With eager eyes o'er all the assembly ran,  
And heard meanwhile the monarch, Aladine,  
Who, from his splendid throne, the first began :  
' Truly, my faithful counsellors, the last  
Was for our realm a most disastrous day ;  
The lofty hopes we formed are well-nigh past ;  
Alone from Egypt's aid there gleams one ray.

## XXXVI

‘ But well ye see how that, from peril near,  
 The hope is distant, for which reason I  
 Have you assembled, that each worthy peer  
 May counsel us in this emergency.’  
 He ceased, and straight an ominous buzz was heard,  
 Like breezes whispering through umbrageous glade,  
 When rising up, serene and undeterred,  
 Arganté thus the murmuring sounds allayed :

## XXXVII

‘ Magnanimous monarch,’ was the proud reply  
 Of that undaunted, fiery cavalier,  
 ‘ Why seek to prove us ? why to us apply ?  
 No need there is for our opinion here ;  
 In our own selves let us alone confide ;  
 And if it’s true that nothing Virtue harms,  
 From her assistance ask, make her our guide ;  
 Life let us love not, when she calls to arms.

## XXXVIII

‘ Nor speak I thus that I at all despair  
 Of Egypt’s speedy and most certain aid ;  
 Nor is it right in man, nor is it fair

was made :

rits rise,  
 ny,  
 I death despise.’

## XXXIX

Those words Arganté spoke, and only those,  
Like one who spoke of no uncertain things ;  
When with commanding air Orcano rose,  
One who, descended from a race of kings,  
In warlike deeds approved himself of yore ;  
But now united to a youthful bride,  
As sire and spouse the battle-field forbore ;  
In home affections all his manhood died.

## XL

‘ Sire,’ he exclaimed, ‘ far be it from me to accuse  
The fervour of high-minded words that start  
From warm magnanimous impulse, and refuse  
To be confined within the swelling heart ;  
Whence if his nature too much warmth betrays  
When before thee the brave Circassian pleads,  
We well his fire may pardon, who displays  
An equal fervour in heroic deeds.

## XLI

‘ But ’tis thy duty, whom each added year  
And long experience have so prudent made,  
To place the curb of thy advice whene’er  
He into too great transports is betrayed ;  
The hopes to balance of prospective aid  
With danger near—nay, present to our view,  
And with the arms and charge of Frank brigade,  
Thy time-worn rampart and defences new.

## XLII

‘ We have, if freely I may speak my thought,  
A city strong by nature and by art,  
But against it what huge machines are brought,  
What dreadful engines on the adverse part !  
The end is doubtful, still I hope, my liege,  
Yet dread the war’s uncertainty, and fear  
If on us pressed a closer state of siege,  
That ’mong us famine will at length appear.

## XLIII

‘ For all the stores of cattle and of grain,  
That yesterday within the walls were brought,  
Was great good fortune, while on yonder plain  
The Franks alone of crimson battle thought ;  
Yet that were poor provision to supply  
So large a city, should the siege endure ;  
And last it will, tho’ Egypt, our ally,  
Came on the very day he named as sure.

## XLIV

‘ But what if he delay ? Well, well, I grant  
That he his promise and thy hope forestalls ;  
But not for that do I behold him plant  
His conquering flag on these beleaguered walls :  
We must, O king, with that same Godfred fight,  
With those same chiefs, and those same legions, who  
So often have dispersed and put to flight  
Turks, Arabs, Persians, and us Syrians, too.

## XLV

‘And what they are, Arganté, thou shouldst know,  
Who didst so often before them retreat,  
Who didst so often thy broad shoulders show,  
For safety trusting to thy nimble feet ;  
I also know it, and the warrior maid,  
Nor is there one can taunt the other ; I  
Would none reproach or blame ; we all displayed,  
As much as mortals could, our bravery.

## XLVI

‘Aye, tho’ Arganté scowls with deadly hate,  
Enraged, unwilling the sad truth to hear,  
I see, by fixed, inevitable Fate,  
The foe conducted to sure goal, and fear  
Not hosts unnumbered, not the strongest wall  
Will e’er prevent their reign and their command ;  
And this I say—to witness Heaven I call—  
From love of thee and of my native land.

## XLVII

‘Ah, prudent king of Tripoli ! how wise  
Both peace and his dominions to retain,  
While dead the stubborn soldan is, or lies  
Bound by the foot in slavery’s galling chain,  
Or for still greater miseries reserved,  
An exiled, timid runaway, doth smart ;  
Yet had he yielded part, he had preserved,  
By gifts and tribute, the remaining part.’

## XLVIII

In such a roundabout and tortuous cloak  
Orcano did his covert sense disguise ;  
To sue for peace and bend to others' yoke,  
He dared not openly the king advise.  
But the indignant soldan could no more  
Endure his language, or concealed remain,  
When the magician whispered him : ' Signor,  
Canst tamely hear him speak in such a strain ?'

## XLIX

• ' I, for my part, against my will crouch here,  
And burn with rage and shame,' the soldan said.  
The angry accents scarcely uttered were  
When the cloud's veil that was around them spread,  
Dissolving, vanished in the void of space,  
And in the light of day he stood confessed ;  
With noble spirit shone his haughty face,  
As thus the startled council he addressed :

## L

' I, whom ye prate of, in your presence stand—  
No runaway, no timid soldan I—  
And offer now to prove, with this right hand,  
That yon vile coward in his throat doth lie ;  
I, who of blood such ample torrents poured,  
And piled up hills of carnage in the fight,  
Hemmed in by foes, without one friend to afford  
The least assistance—I accused of flight !

## LI

‘ But should yon wretch, or any such as he,  
False to his creed and country, venture but  
To hint at league of such indignity—  
Thy pardon, sire—I slay him on the spot ;  
First lambs and wolves shall mingle in one fold,  
And doves and serpents in one nest agree,  
Ere the same country Turks and Christians hold,  
Without incarnate animosity.’

## LII

While speaking thus, in threatening attitude,  
On his sword’s hilt he kept his fierce right hand ;  
Dumb with astonishment, the others viewed  
His furious look and savage reprimand.  
At length he made obeisance to the king,  
With a less wicked and enfeigned brow ;  
‘ Hope !’ he exclaimed ; ‘ no trifling aid I bring :  
Prince Solyman, my liege, is with thee now.’

## LIII

King Aladine, who had to greet him sped,  
Answered : ‘ How welcome is thy presence here ;  
I feel not now the loss of thousands dead,  
Dear friend, and I began the worst to fear.  
Thou canst my throne secure, and in brief space  
The fallen condition of thine own renew,  
If Heaven forbid not.’ Then in close embrace  
Around his neck his circling arms he threw.

## LIV

Their greeting over, his own chair of state  
The king conceded to the great Nicene,  
Then placed himself upon the left, while sate  
Close at his side the sapient seer, Ismene ;  
But while the monarch asked him to disclose  
The news, and he complied with his request,  
To honour Solyman Clorinda rose  
First of the court, then followed all the rest ;

## LV

'Mong them Ormusses, he who undertook  
To guide his Arab troop, and while the blaze  
Of war burned fiercest, the high road forsook,  
And wound about so amid blind by-ways,  
That, favoured by the silence and the shade,  
At length he brought them safe into the town,  
And, with the forage captured in the raid,  
Afforded succour to the garrison.

## LVI

With scowl that his disdainful dudgeon shows,  
Sole stayed Arganté, motionless and mute,  
Like a majestic lion in repose,  
That rolls his eyes, but stirreth not a foot ;  
Orcano hung his crest-fallen head, nor could  
The withering glance of Solyman withstand.  
In council thus the Syrian tyrant stood,  
The Turkish king, and magnates of the land.



## LVII

But Godfred, following up his victory,  
Had cleared the passes as the vanquished fled,  
And had ordained that the last honours be  
Rendered meanwhile to the illustrious dead ;  
And now commands that on the second day  
The troops be ready to assault the walls,  
And with war's fiercest, deadliest display  
The close-invested Saracen appals.

## LVIII

And since he recognised the troop that came  
To his assistance, 'gainst the infidel,  
Consisted of his dearest friends, the same  
That followed the insidious syren's spell ;  
And with them Prince Tancredi, who was thrown  
Into vile bondage by Armida's hand ;  
Before the hermit and some friends alone  
He straightway summoned that adventurous band.

## LIX

Arrived, 'Pray one of you,' he said, 'declare  
The uncertain course of your brief wandering,  
And by what fortune ye enabled were  
In such great need such great relief to bring.'  
Ashamed, they hung their heads, for all begun  
To feel what bitter thoughts slight error woke ;  
At length the British king's illustrious son,  
Raising his brow, the painful silence broke.

## LX

‘ Departed we, who were not drawn by lot,  
Each following furtively, alone, the trace—  
The trace fallacious, I deny it not—  
Of loadstone Love, of fair insidious face ;  
But as we went thro’ many a tortuous pass,  
Among us discords sprang and jealousies,  
Our love fomented and our hate (alas !  
Too late, I knew it) by her words and eyes.

## LXI

‘ At length we reached that spot on which God chose,  
In flaky torrents, to pour down his fire,  
Revenging outraged Nature upon those  
So strongly wedded to depraved desire ;  
Where once was fruitful soil and country fair,  
Bituminous waters form a barren lake,  
And where they reach with vapours load the air,  
And all around a foul effluvium make.

## LXII

‘ This is that stagnant sea where may be thrown  
The heaviest weight, yet ne’er the bottom reach ;  
Man floats thereon—nay, steel and solid stone,  
As tho’ light fir they were, or buoyant beech.  
In it a castle sits in lonely pride,  
A narrow bridge gives access to the pile :  
Here she received us, and—when once inside,  
I know not how—all nature seemed to smile.

## LXIII

‘The air was soft, the atmosphere serene,  
And all creation wore a joyous look ;  
There, thro’ sweet groves of myrtle, ever green,  
A fountain rose, and fell a brawling brook ;  
The leaves rained dreamy music on the grass,  
And tranquil slumbers in their fall impart ;  
Birds sang : the marble and the gold I pass,  
Though marvels they of labour and of art.

## LXIV

‘On the smooth sward, where fell the deepest shade,  
Near the soft murmur of the crystal flood,  
With sculptured vases decked, a feast was laid  
Of the most costly wines and daintiest food.  
There was the produce of each season, there  
All earth and sea could yield, or art provide ;  
While round a hundred damsels, no less fair,  
That smart attended, and our wants supplied.

## LXV

‘She with her charming smile and winning speech  
Tempered the fatal food and deadly draught,  
And while still seated at the table, each  
A long oblivion in the goblet quaffed.  
She rose and said, “ I soon come back.” Her look,  
Returned, was not so tranquil as before ;  
In her right hand a little wand she shook,  
Her left a volume held of mystic lore.

## LXVI

‘ But as the enchantress read, I felt a change  
Of place, of life, volition, and of thought ;  
A new desire crept o’er me (influence strange !);  
I plunged into the brook—I swam—nor ought  
Knew I how wondrously each limb draws in,  
Nor how both arms into my body slide ;  
I shrivel up ; scales take the place of skin ;  
No longer man—transformed to fish, I glide.

## LXVII

‘ Thus changed in nature and in shape were all,  
And with me swam in that bright silvery stream :  
What I was then, I can but now recall  
As a distempered and illusive dream.  
Our forms, at length, it pleased her to restore ;  
But we were dumb, ’twixt wonder and affright,  
When she, with brow still cloudy as before,  
Menaced us with fresh witness of her might.

## LXVIII

‘ “ Known, then,” she said, “ is my supremacy,  
And what full empire o’er your lives I hold ;  
For it depends upon my will that ye,  
Eternal prisoners, ne’er Heaven’s light behold ;  
Or birds become, or shoot forth spreading roots,  
Within the earth’s prolific bosom sown ;  
Or, clothed with shaggy foreheads, roam as brutes ;  
To water melt, or petrify to stone.

## LXIX

‘ “ Still ye may all avoid my bitter rage  
By paying strict obedience to my words ;  
Pagans become, and for our kingdom wage,  
’Gainst impious Godfred, your avenging swords.”  
We all refused, with horror, the foul pact ;  
Alone Rambaldo the enchantress gains.  
Then—since her power ’twere vain to counteract,  
She cast us in a dungeon, bound in chains.

## LXX

‘ To that same castle Prince Tancredi came  
By chance, and he was made a prisoner too ;  
But a short time in durance the false dame  
Detained us ; and if what I heard be true,  
An envoy from Damascus’ lord obtained  
Permission from the sorceress to bring  
Us captives back, helpless, unarmed, enchained,  
With an armed escort, to the Egyptian king.

## LXXI

‘ Thus we the weary road were journeying o’er,  
When, by Heaven’s lofty Providence decreed,  
Gallant Rinaldo, who doth evermore  
Exalt his glory by some fresh bright deed,  
Fell in with us, nor failed at once to attack  
The knights, our guards, whom, with his wonted powers,  
He slew and conquered, and to us gave back  
The arms they wore, which formerly were ours.

## LXXII

‘ I saw—these saw him—in that hour of strife ;  
We heard his voice, and grasped his noble hand ;  
False are the rumours that report his life  
As lost, and spread confusion thro’ the land :  
But three days since he with a pilgrim guide  
Took leave of us, and unto Antioch went ;  
But, before starting, cast his arms aside,  
Bloodstained, and from repeated battle rent.’

## LXXIII

Thus spoke the prince ; meanwhile his beaming eyes  
Heavenwards the hermit turned, with fervent air ;  
His changing cheek and colour seemed to rise,  
And catch its sacred hues while gazing there ;  
Full of his God, and rapt with zeal sublime,  
To angel minds his spirit soared, whence he  
Unveiled the never-ending course of time,  
And pierced the secrets of futurity.

## LXXIV

Then, bursting out in louder, loftier strain,  
Foretold events that would in time arise,  
While all, attracted by his look, remain  
Attentive to his thundered prophecies.  
‘ Rinaldo lives,’ he cried ; ‘ what else one hears  
Is lies and tricks of woman’s baleful will.  
He lives ; his young and inexperienced years  
The Heavens reserve for greater glories still.

## LXXV

‘ These boyish feats but indices supply  
Of what all Asia knows—his future fame ;  
Lo ! I see clearly that, as years roll by,  
He will the pride of impious monarchs tame,  
And ’neath the shadow of her silver wing  
His eagle will protect the Church and Rome,  
Them from the oppressor’s claws delivering ;  
And worthy children shall adorn his home,

## LXXVI

‘ And children’s children, and their sons, who thence  
Will bright and notable example have ;  
Who will, from Cæsars’ unjust violence,  
The papal mitre and our temples save ;  
To oppress the proud, the lowly to restore,  
The guilty punish, and defend the right,  
Will be their aim ; thus past the sun will soar  
Haught Este’s eagle in her glorious flight.

## LXXVII

‘ And right it is, beholding truth and light,  
That she to Peter mortal thunder bring,  
And that, where’er in Jesu’s cause men fight,  
She spread in triumph her unconquered wing,  
Since, by predestined statute, Providence  
To her this innate virtue has decreed ;  
And wills that she, now summoned back from whence  
She flew, to this great enterprise proceed.’

## LXXVIII

With words like these the prudent Peter cheered  
Their hearts, with terror for Rinaldo fraught :  
Sole, 'mid the general joy, the chief appeared  
Silent, immersed in deep and anxious thought.  
Meanwhile the night in clouds of darkness rose,  
And o'er earth's face her murky mantle spread ;  
The rest retired to give their limbs repose,  
But from Prince Godfred's eyes all sleep had fled.





NOTES  
TO  
THE FIRST VOLUME.

NOTE 1.

CANTO I.—STANZA LXXVII.

Here occurs one of the errors alluded to in the Preface. Mount Seir lies very far to the southward. It is the Lebanon range—still the abode of Christians—that dominates Tripoli.

NOTE 2.

CANTO III.—STANZA XII.

This is the tower now called Goliath's.

NOTE 3.

CANTO III.—STANZA XIII.

It must have been from the Damascus Gate, whose embattled turrets, lichened with gold, present so picturesque an appearance, that Clorinda sallied forth to attack the Frank foraging party. The hill in front, now called the Cave of Jeremiah, we can readily fancy to be that on which the Christians rallied when driven back by Clorinda:

'Being there supported by the rising ground.'

A little farther down is shewn Godfred's Tree, the supposed site of his headquarters. Here it was that our Prince of Wales encamped during his visit to the Holy City.

## NOTE 4.

CANTO III.—STANZA XXXII.

This alludes to the game of Garoselli, introduced into Italy by the Moors.

## NOTE 5.

CANTO III.—STANZA LV.

The description of Jerusalem given in this and the two following stanzas is most accurate. Viewed from an eminence on the north side, close to and fronting the Damascus Gate, the two ridges are distinctly seen, the Tyropæon valley separating them and dividing the city. This valley, now partially filled up with the débris of ages, was formerly much more deep, as may be seen by an examination of the external wall, which crosses it to the south. Inside it is only ten feet high, while on the outside it is more than fifty feet.

Not far from this latter point are still visible the remains of a bridge, that, springing from the western wall of the Haram, connected it with Mount Sion.

The approach on the eastern, southern, and western side is steep, occasionally precipitous. Alone on the northern it is plain, and here the poet is very exact.

‘ Upon the fourth you go, nor seem to rise ; ’

the ascent from the north-eastern to the north-western angle being very gradual.

The supply of water is the same as described by Tasso. Each house has its cistern, in which is collected the rain from the flat roofs.

The pools still exist ; the names of those of Bethesda and Hezekiah will be familiar to most readers. The former was dry, but in the latter a man was drowned during my stay at Jerusalem. As regards ‘ living springs ’ those best acquainted with the topography of Jerusalem believe in their existence, though they have not been able to discover their source. The fountain of Siloam, an intermittent spring, is known to proceed from the so-called Fountain of the Virgin, outside the town, at the end of the valley of Jehoshaphat ; and that is supposed to be derived from a source that springs within the enclosure of the Temple. The whole subject of ‘ living water ’ is shrouded in great mystery, and nothing is positively known. The cardinal points are very precisely detailed in the fifty-seventh stanza.

## NOTE 6.

CANTO III.—STANZA LXIV.

The tower here called 'The Angle' is the same as Goliath's, it being situated in the north-western angle of the walls.

## NOTE 7.

CANTO X.—STANZA XXVIII.

The poet here describes a communication between the Western Wall and the Tower of Antonia. Of this there remains no trace, and as the passage would have had to traverse the Tyropæon valley in order to reach the latter, is difficult to believe that such a one ever existed.

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JERUSALEM DELIVERED.

VOL. II.



THE  
JERUSALEM DELIVERED  
OF  
TORQUATO TASSO.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

JOHN KINGSTON JAMES, KNT. M.A.

'O Victor, unsurpassed in modern song' (BYRON).

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL II.

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# ARGUMENTS

TO

## THE SECOND VOLUME.

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Peter the Hermit's advice, Godfred, previous to assaulting the town, conducts his army to hear mass on the Mount of Olives, where they receive benediction from the bishops, William and Ademar—In consequence of a previous vow, Godfred assumes the dress and resolves to share the perils of the assault as a private soldier—Others of the princes follow his example—The town assaulted, a breach is made—Clorinda wounds or kills seven of the principal leaders, lastly, Godfred himself, who is obliged to quit the field, leaving Gueiph in charge of the army—He in his turn is also wounded—Encouraged by this success, Arganté invites Solyman to sally out—They are met and repulsed by Tancredi—An angel descends from heaven and heals Godfred's wounds—He returns, reanimates his troops, and withdraws them at the approach of night . . . . . PAGE 1

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## CANTO XI. *Can*

### I

WHILE thus the captain of the Christian powers  
Urged them the warlike instruments to frame,  
He being resolved to storm the royal towers,  
The hermit Peter to his presence came,  
And drawing him aside, the sage began,  
In accents stern and with a solemn air :  
' Hosts of this world, O chief, thou ledest on,  
But that is not what first should claim thy care.

### II

' Begin from Heaven, and first with penitence,  
In public worship and on bended knee,  
Invoke the saints' and angels' army, whence  
Alone thou mayest hope for victory.  
In sacred vestments let the priests precede,  
And anthems chaunt with suppliant voice, while ye,  
Great glorious leaders of the army, lead  
Their ranks to join those strains of piety.'

## III

Thus the stern hermit did the captain chide,  
And Godfred deemed his admonition wise.  
'Servant beloved of Jesus,' he replied,  
'Well pleased I am to follow thy advice.  
Now, while I invite the chiefs to come with me,  
Thou to the bishops of the host repair,  
William and holy Ademar, and be  
The sacred rites and pious pomp your care.'

## IV

The reverend sage next morn assembled round  
With the high priests those of less station, where  
Within the camp, on consecrated ground,  
They used to glorify the Lord in prayer :  
The others in white surplices were dressed,  
The bishops gold-embroidered mantles wore,  
Which in twain parted, buttoned at the breast  
O'er snowy lawn ; their heads proud mitres bore.

## V

Peter walked first alone, and to the wind  
Displayed the sign in Paradise revered ;  
With slow and solemn step the choir behind  
In two distinct extended lines appeared,  
And in alternate melody replied,  
With suppliant voice, with meek and lowly air ;  
And closing up their ranks, went side by side,  
William and his companion Ademar.

## VI

Then, as commanders do, the Bouillon passed  
Alone, without companion at his side ;  
Next came the leaders two by two, and last  
The camp, with weapons of defence supplied :  
Proceeding thus the assembled host passed thro'  
And out the intrenchments ; in the stilly air  
No warlike clangour rose, no bugles blew—  
The only sound was piety and prayer.

## VII

Thee, Father, and Thy dear coequal Son ;  
Thee who from both proceeding breath'st love's fire ;  
Thee, Virgin Mother of the God in man,  
They now invoke to favour their desire ;  
And you that move Heaven's fulgent Seraphim  
In trinal orbits ; thee whose hands did lave  
The pure unstained humanity of Him  
Who knew no sin, in the life-giving wave ;

## VIII

They now invoke : Thee too, the solid Rock,  
Whereon Christ's Church is built, whose lofty place  
A new successor fills, whose hands unlock  
The blessed gates of pardon and of grace ;  
And the other saint apostles that revealed  
The glorious tidings of triumphant Death ;  
And those brave martyrs who the Truth had sealed  
With their own life-blood and their dying breath :

## IX

Those, too, whose pious pens or precepts true  
Pointed Heaven's path to all that from it erred ;  
And her, Christ's dear and faithful handmaid, who  
The noblest life's felicity preferred ;  
And virgins chaste in convent cell immured,  
Whom to Himself in wedlock God unites ;  
And those who firmly tortures had endured,  
Despising crowns and the vain world's delights.

## X

Chanting such hymns, the pious populace,  
Winding along in ample circles, came  
Direct towards Olivet with solemn pace,  
Which from the olive tree derives its name ;  
A Mount from sacred story wide-world known :  
It to the eastward of the wall doth rise,  
And parting it from the imperial town  
Jehoshaphat's precipitous valley lies.

## XI

Thither the tuneful army bends its way,  
And with its music the deep valley fills ;  
To the high peaks the sounds are borne away,  
And Echo answers from a thousand hills.  
It seemed like sylvan choir that was concealed  
Among the trees, or from the caverns came ;  
Such resonant reverberations pealed  
With Jesus' now, and now with Mary's name.



## XII

Meanwhile the walls the astonished Pagans throng,  
And watch in silent wonder from their heights  
The slow-paced windings, the submissive song,  
And the strange splendour of the outlandish rites ;  
But when the pageant's novelty had ceased,  
Derisive yells the impious miscreants poured ;  
And as their taunts and blasphemies increased,  
The torrent, mount, and spacious valley roared.

## XIII

But not for that did Jesus' flock refrain  
From their sweet melody and touching words ;  
Nor did they heed them, nor more notice deign  
Than to so many flocks of chattering birds ;  
Nor feared, though by far-darted shafts pursued,  
That such could check their harmony divine,  
But hoped they would be able to conclude  
The hymns begun with such devout design.

## XIV

An altar, then, on the hill-top they raised,  
Where the Lord's Supper by the priest was spread ;  
On either side refulgent cressets blazed  
Of burnished gold suspended over head.  
William put on more costly vestments here ;  
But first in silent meditation stays,  
Then lifting up his voice in accents clear,  
With self-arraignment and thanksgiving prays.

## XV

Those near him listened with attentive ear ;  
Those far, 'twas all they could, kept fixed their eyes ;  
But when he had performed the rites austere  
Of the pure Lamb's mysterious sacrifice,  
'Depart,' he said, and, raising up his hands,  
With priestly unction the Crusaders blest ;  
Then to the camp returned the pious bands  
By the same path that coming they had pressed.

## XVI

The encampment entered and dismissed the ranks,  
Godfred at once to his pavilion went,  
Escorted by a dense array of Franks,  
Ev'n to the threshold of the imperial tent.  
Here he took leave of them, retaining none  
But the great chiefs to join his festive board ;  
And in the honoured seat that faced his own,  
Placed with respect Toulouse's aged lord.

## XVII

But when their thirst and natural appetite  
For food was sated, Godfred added : ' All  
Prepared must be, with the dawn's earliest light,  
To carry by assault yon rampired wall.  
As that will be a day of sweat and blows,  
So this to rest and preparation spare :  
Let each withdraw, then, and enjoy repose,  
And for the fight himself and troops prepare.'

## XVIII

They then took leave, and, by the trumpet's sound,  
The heralds straight the chief's commands convey,  
That every soldier under arms be found,  
Marshalled and ready at the dawn of day.  
Thus they that morn gave partly to repose,  
And part to preparation and deep thought,  
Until calm Night, rest's silent friend, arose,  
And a fresh respite to their labours brought.

## XIX

Still doubtful was the dawn, the birth of day  
But faintly in the Orient was discerned ;  
No iron share cleaved yet the dewsprent clay,  
Nor had the shepherds to the fields returned ;  
Still on the boughs slept safe each little bird ;  
Free were the woods from hound or hunter's cry ;  
When, at the morning's bugle call, was heard  
'To arms !'—'to arms !' re-echoed through the sky.

## XX

'To arms !' 'to arms !' Those joyous, welcome words  
Concordant thousands thunder as one man.  
Aroused, Prince Godfred rises up, nor girds  
His golden cuishes or great breastplate on,  
But now the arms of a foot soldier wore,  
Not stiff or hard, but lissome and most light ;  
Their easy burden he already bore,  
When gallant Raymond joined the pious knight ;

## XXI

And seeing the captain armed in such a mode,  
His secret purpose instantly divined.  
'Where is,' he cried, 'thy corslet's solid load ?  
Why leave thine iron armature behind,  
And thus half armed go forth ? I can't approve  
That thou shouldst with such poor defence depart ;  
To me, signor, these indications prove  
That bent on humble goal of fame thou art.

## XXII

'What seekest thou, O prince ? The simple prize  
Of him who scales a wall ? This task impose  
On the less worthy crowd, whose duty 'tis,  
And let them their less useful lives expose.  
Resume thou, then, thy usual arms and post,  
And of thy body, for our sake, take care ;  
Thy soul, the life and spirit of the host,  
For God's sake guard, and from such risks forbear.'

## XXIII

He ceased, and thus the gallant Godfred : ' Know  
That when in Clermont, in my young career,  
On me this sword great Urban did bestow,  
And made me Christ's devoted cavalier,  
I vowed to God in secret, that I would  
The part of captain not alone sustain,  
But would employ my valour, when I could,  
As simple soldier in this great campaign.

## XXIV

' When I shall have, then, all my tactics formed,  
Against the foe the combat to renew,  
And fully have the offices performed  
That from commander of the host are due,  
'Tis right that yonder I my course direct,  
And the vow made unto my God observe  
(Nor do I think to that thou canst object) ;  
Let Him then guard me, and my life preserve.'

## XXV

He ceased. At once the cavaliers of France,  
And his two brothers, his example shared ;  
And the other princely leaders, without lance,  
In lighter arms as foot-soldiers appeared.  
Meanwhile, the Pagans had ascended where  
The lofty ramparts, stretching towards the West,  
Confront the starry cluster of the Bear,  
That part being less protected than the rest.

## XXVI

Elsewhere so strong, the city had not recked  
The slightest damage from the foe's assault ;  
But here not only did the king collect  
His regular soldiers, but, in their default,  
Had, as a last resource, assembled there  
The old, and those of ev'n the tenderest years ;  
Who move about, and to the stronger bear  
Bitumen, sulphur, lime, darts, stones, and spears.

## XXVII

With flashing arms, balistæ, pikes, and bows  
Bristles the rampart that o'erlooks the plain ;  
And there, in form of horrid giant, rose  
Breast high above it, mighty Solyman ;  
Amid the merlons of the lofty wall  
Arganté towers, and is discerned afar ;  
And in the angle turret, over all,  
Clorinda waits the coming shock of war.

## XXVIII

A heavy load of piercing arrows, lo !  
And burnished quiver from her back depend ;  
And, see ! already she has seized the bow,  
The bolt affixes, and prepares to bend.  
Upon the passage of the advancing foe  
The lovely archer sets her eager eyes :  
Thus, Fancy deemed, upon the world below  
The Delian virgin arrowed from the skies.

## XXIX

Beneath, on foot, the hoary monarch made  
His way from gate to gate ; then, from the wall,  
Observed if all his orders were obeyed,  
And cheer and reassurance gave to all ;  
Here reinforcements furnishes, and there  
Of arms and stores provides a fresh supply.  
Meanwhile, sad matrons to the mosques repair,  
To supplicate their impious deity :

## XXX

‘ Do thou, O Lord, with just and powerful hand,  
Asunder rive the Frank marauder’s spear,  
And ’neath these portals strow that blasphemous band  
Which desecrates the name that we revere.’  
Thus prayed, nor down there were their voices heard,  
’Mid Death’s eternal lamentations lost :  
Now, while the city prayed, and thus prepared,  
The pious Bouillon marshals out his host.

## XXXI

With extreme foresight and consummate art,  
He ranges forth his foot, and in two sides  
Obliquely formed, in echelon, that part  
Intended to assault the wall, divides.  
In the centre, the balistæ he unites  
With other horrid instruments of war,  
Whence stones and javelins towards the embattled heights,  
Like flashing thunderbolts, projected are.

## XXXII

Behind the foot the heavy horse he posts,  
The light sends forward to patrol around ;  
Then gives the sign of battle. ’Mid the hosts  
The archers and the slingers so abound,  
And arms so numerous from their engines fly,  
That from the merlons the defenders fall ;  
Some quit their posts, and some are seen to die ;  
Thinned are already those that crowned the wall.

## XXXIII

Then dashed the Franks impetuous o'er the field,  
And towards the ramparts with fresh vigour sped ;  
And some had shield adapted upon shield,  
And with them made a covering for the head ;  
Some crept beneath the mighty engines, which  
Afforded shelter from the stony rain,  
Then strove to fill, arriving at the ditch,  
Its void, and make it level with the plain.

## XXXIV

Not of soft mud or water was the fosse, (1)  
For this the soil allowed not ; whence with ease  
They filled it up, tho' deep and broad across,  
With gabions, stones, and sods of turf, and trees.  
Meanwhile Alcasto was the first to show  
His daring head, and 'gan the wall to scale,  
Raising a ladder, which he mounted, tho'  
Deluged by fiery rain and iron hail.

## XXXV

The impetuous Switzer had already won  
Half the aerial path with matchless force,  
Butt for a thousand arrows, yet not one  
So injured him as to obstruct his course ;  
When a huge mass of round and ponderous rock,  
Like shell from mortar, by Arganté thrown,  
As up he clomb, Alcasto's helmet struck,  
And to the bottom dashed him headlong down.



## XXXVI

Not mortal was the blow, but still the fall  
Stunned him ; he lay a voiceless, moveless weight.  
Then cried the gibing victor from the wall :  
' Fallen is the first, who next will share his fate ?  
Why not come forth, ye sneaking, skulking braves,  
And open battle, like Arganté, dare ?  
No aid ye'll find in your outlandish caves,  
But in them die, like wild beast in his lair.'

## XXXVII

Not for his challenge ceased the Franks, concealed  
Beneath their concave covering, but remained  
Compact and close, each 'neath his upraised shield,  
Which firm the bolts and ponderous weights sustained.  
Now 'gainst the walls the battering rams are led,  
Vast engines of colossal woodwork reared,  
With a ram's solid iron-plated head,  
Whose butt alike by gate and wall is feared.

## XXXVIII

Meanwhile a rock, suspended from the walls  
By hands of hundreds to protect the town,  
Upon the tortoise fell, and as it falls  
It seemed as tho' a mountain had fallen down,  
The shields' inwoven union crashing through ;  
It many a helmet smashed and many a head,  
Strewing with arms the ground beneath, which grew,  
From bones, and brains, and blood, a ghastly red.

## XXXIX

No longer now beneath the sheltering roof  
Of their machines the attacking Franks remain,  
But from the latent risks to open proof,  
Dauntless, rush forth, and their own strength maintain.  
These ladders fix and scale the lofty wall ;  
These batter its foundations ; lo, its flanks  
Already totter—nay, begin to fall—  
Before the desperate onslaught of the Franks.

## XL

And fallen they had beneath the horrid blows  
Which the great battering ram directed there,  
Did not the Turks their violence oppose  
With all the known appliances of war ;  
Gabions of wool they interpose where'er  
The mighty beam inclines its murderous course,  
Which on themselves the rude concussion bear :  
Thus the soft substance breaks the engine's force.

## XLI

While bravely thus the Christians fought, and taxed  
Their every effort to possess the town,  
Seven times Clorinda bent, seven times relaxed  
Her fatal bow, and shot seven arrows down ;  
And oft, as thither the swift quarrels scud,  
So oft the barb and feathered wings are stained,  
Not in plebeian, but in noblest blood :  
Ignoble mark that haughty fair disdained.

## XLII

The first she wounded was a cavalier,  
The younger heir of England's king. His head  
But scarcely did above the mantelet peer,  
Than against him the deadly quarrel sped ;  
Nor could steel gauntlet—with such force it flew—  
Prevent it riving his right hand in twain ;  
Whence from the fight, disabled, he withdrew,  
Fuming, but more from passion than from pain.

## XLIII

The Count of Amboise on the trench's bank,  
And on the ladder bold Clotharius died ;  
From breast to back transfixed the former sank,  
The last her arrow pierced from side to side :  
The Flemish chief's left arm, while in the act  
Of swinging the huge ram, her shaft restrained ;  
He paused, and strove the arrow to extract,  
But in his flesh the iron barb remained.

## XLIV

Incautious Ademar, who, far remote,  
Watched the fierce combat with solicitous look,  
The mortal reed upon his temple smote ;  
When, as he placed his hand where he was struck,  
Through it, behold, another arrow tore,  
And nailed it to his face ; upon the hill  
Sank the bold priest, and bathed with sacred gore  
The arms directed by a woman's skill.

## XLV

Then near the battlements, on Palamede,  
While, scorning every peril, he ascends  
Up the steep ladder, the seventh fatal reed  
Falls, and its point in his right eye descends,  
And, passing thro' its nerves and concave ball,  
At the nape issues in most bloody guise ;  
Headlong he tumbles from the assaulted wall,  
And at its foot, without a struggle, dies.

## XLVI

Thus shot Clorinda. Meanwhile Godfred sought  
Another plan to attack the Saracens,  
Having against the nearest portal brought  
The most colossal of his huge machines ;  
This was a tower of wood, whose giant height  
To the wall's level rose, and, with a strong  
Body of men being freighted for the fight,  
Was slowly dragged on rolling wheels along.

## XLVII

The moving mass approached the battle's brunt,  
Launching forth bolts and javelins at the foes,  
And as in action ship with ship is wont,  
So with the adverse walls it tried to close ;  
But, on their guard, the Pagan cavaliers  
Shoved off its frowning front and sides immense ;  
Battering with stones, and thrusting back with spears,  
Now its huge wheels, and now its battlements.

## XLVIII

Such flights of shafts and stones were hurled, that black  
The face of heaven, from these, from those, became ;  
Midway, two clouds of missiles met, and back  
Rebounded some of them to whence they came :  
As stripped of leaves are trees by wintry rains,  
Congealed to hail ; as fruit, still unripe, falls  
Before its time upon the whitened plains,  
So fell the Pagans from the embattled walls.

## XLIX

But since on them the greatest losses light,  
As shielded less by helmet or cuirass,  
Part of those still surviving take to flight,  
Cowed by the thunder of that mighty mass ;  
But stayed Nicæa's former lord, with him  
There likewise stayed some few, the army's flower ;  
And fierce Arganté, snatching up a beam,  
Rushed to resist and counterpoise the tower.

## L

Thrusting it back, he kept it at the length  
Of the long fir with powerful arm ; and there  
Down came Clorinda to display her strength,  
And the grave perils of her comrade share.  
The Christians meanwhile cut the ropes that bound  
The pendent wool with long sharp sickles, whence  
This their protection falling to the ground,  
The ramparts left disarmed of all defence.

## III

Thus tower above, and fiercer far below,  
The battering ram continued its dead thunder ;  
Whence, from within, the streets began to show  
Thro' the breached walls, thus rudely rent asunder.  
Godfred now left his station in the field,  
More close the crumbling ramparts to explore,  
Completely covered by the larger shield  
Which he so seldom in the battle bore.

## LII

And looking round attentively, descried  
Down to the breach Prince Solyman descend,  
And where the gaping ruins yawned most wide  
To plant himself, the passage to defend ;  
Clorinda guarded all the upper part,  
And with her stayed the fierce Circassian knight :  
Thus looking, Godfred felt his throbbing heart  
Burn with magnanimous ardour for the fight.

## LIII

Whence turning round to good Sigier, he said  
(He for him bore another shield and bow) :  
' Give me the other, faithful squire, instead  
Of this, that less encumbered I may go ;  
For I will over yon dismantled stone  
Try to be first the doubtful pass to free ;  
High time it is that to the world were shown  
Some noble token of our gallantry.'

## LIV

His shield exchanged, he had scarcely spoke, when flew  
A whizzing shaft and struck the cavalier,  
Piercing his leg, and passing onwards thro'  
The nervous part where pain is most severe.  
The honour Fame, Clorinda, gives to thee,  
That 'twas thy hand the deadly cord that drew ;  
And if that day or death or slavery  
Thy Pagan comrades 'scaped, to thee 'tis due.

## LV

But that brave chief, as tho' he did not feel  
The anguish of his wound, would not arrest  
His onward movement, but with matchless zeal  
The ruins mounted, and cheered on the rest.  
Still finding that his leg can ill sustain  
His body's weight, that he can only halt,  
And that all motion but increased the pain,  
At length is forced to abandon the assault.

## LVI

And gallant Guelpho beckoning with his hand,  
Addressed him thus : ' Constrained I am to go ;  
To thee I delegate the chief command ;  
Do thou my duty, in my absence, do ;  
But a short time I shall be absent ; I  
Go, and return.' This said, he left the field,  
Mounted a nimble courser that stood nigh,  
Yet could not reach the intrenchments unconcealed.

## LVII

Godfred's departure seemed to turn the tide ;  
The Franks give way and their success departs,  
While strength increases on the adverse side,  
And new-born hopes refresh the Pagans' hearts ;  
His grace no more the God of War affords,  
To nerve the faithful ; their first ardour fails ;  
No longer blood attracts their sluggish swords ;  
The very clarion's notes seem dying wails.

## LVIII

And on the battlements swift reappear  
The fugitives, thence chased by wild alarms ;  
And seeing a woman show no sign of fear,  
True love of country all the women arms ;  
You see them run and place themselves on guard,  
With hair dishevelled and with tucked-up gown ;  
Hurl javelins, and all dangers disregard,  
Ev'n death itself, for their beloved town.

## LIX

But what increased the Franks' alarm, and nerved  
With courage the defenders of the walls  
(And quickly by both hosts it was observed),  
Is that Prince Guelpho, stricken, downward falls ;  
Amid a thousand him his Fate o'ertook,  
Guiding a rock its path aerial thro' ;  
At the same time, and by a similar stroke,  
Raymond was caught and hurled down headlong too.



## LX

Bold Eustace, too, upon the trench's bank  
Was also struck ; nor at that moment, so  
Disastrous to the fortune of the Frank,  
'Gainst them directed was a single blow—  
And there were many—that did not divide  
Body from soul, or cause at least some wound.  
Flushed with success, Arganté in his pride  
More fierce became, and thus the foe lampooned :

## LXI

' This is not Antioch ; this is not the night  
Of Christian frauds confederate ; you see  
Warriors awake, the sun's unclouded light,  
And other modes and forms of strategy.  
What, then ! so little are your spirits fired  
By love of praise and booty, that your ranks  
Cease from the encounter, and so soon are tired ?  
Women ye are, nor name deserve of Franks ! '

## LXII

As thus he spoke, the infuriate cavalier  
Worked himself up to such a pitch of rage,  
That the ample city's boundaries appear  
For his great daring insufficient stage ;  
With mighty strides he therefore rushes where  
The open breach gave access to the walls,  
Blocks up the passage, and, with taunting air,  
To Solymano, who stood near him, calls :

## LXIII

‘ Behold the place and moment to decide  
Our valour, Solyman, ’mid yonder host.  
Why cease? what fearest? There, the walls outside,  
Let him the laurel seek that craves it most.’  
Thus spoke: and both, without an instant’s pause,  
Rushed vying to the open field, inspired  
One by blind fury, one by honour’s laws,  
And the fierce challenge of his rival, fired.

## LXIV

Sudden and unexpectedly the twain  
Flashed on the foe, by emulation buoyed ;  
Then were such heaps of Christian soldiers slain,  
Such shields and helmets scattered and destroyed,  
Such ladders broken, and such rams cut down,  
That to a mountain they appeared to swell,  
Forming upon the ruins of the town  
Another wall, in place of that which fell.

## LXV

And those who thought to mount the breach, and gain  
The glorious premium of a mural crown,  
No more aspire an entrance to obtain ;  
Nay, seem ev’n ill prepared to hold their own,  
And to this new and fierce attack give way,  
The engines leaving to their powerful foes,  
But little fit for further service, they  
So battered were by their infuriate blows,

## LXVI

Transported by their impetus, the pair  
On, ever on, in wider circuits scour ;  
Call to the citizens for fire, and bear  
Two blazing pines against the dreaded tower.  
So rush the Furies, from hell's fiery porch,  
To upset the world ; so each gaunt sister shakes,  
In Pluto's service, her far flaring torch,  
And throws aloft her wreaths of hornèd snakes.

## LXVII

But the unconquered Tancred, who, elsewhere,  
Cheered on his Latins 'gainst the Saracens,  
Of the bold deed no sooner was aware,  
And saw the double flame, the two great pines,  
Than, cutting short his words, he quickly moved  
To check the havoc which the Pagans spread ;  
And so significantly his prowess proved,  
That the late victors, vanquished, turned and fled.

## LXVIII

Thus with the turn of varying Fortune, turned  
The varying chances of the doubtful fray.  
Meanwhile, tho' inly for the fight he burned,  
In his great tent, the wounded captain lay :  
Baldwin was there, and good Sigier, nor lacked  
Of sorrowing friends a sympathising train ;  
But, as he strove from out his leg to extract  
The iron barb, he broke the brittle cane.

## LXIX

Then, the most short and expeditious way  
To effect a cure, he bade the leeches take,  
That to the bottom they should open lay  
The wound, and wide and deep incisions make :  
' Send, send me back,' he cried, ' that I may share,  
Ere day is o'er, the glories of the strife.'  
He ceased, and, leaning on a massy spear,  
His leg stretched out to the physician's knife.

## LXX

To aid him came hoar Erotimus, who  
Was born beside the Po ; the healing power  
Of every noble water he well knew,  
And latent virtue of each herb and flower.  
Dear to the Muses, still the sage preferred  
The minor glory of his voiceless art ;  
He, who to snatch from death frail man but cared,  
To names could immortality impart.

## LXXI

The chief, whose rigid look showed no alarm,  
Supported stands, and frets, unmoved to tears,  
While, with his tunic tucked up o'er his arm,  
And robe succinct, the leech still perseveres,  
Now with skilled hand, now with strong herbs, to start  
The imbedded steel ; then tries and tries again,  
With nipping pincers, to extract the dart,  
But can't succeed—his labour is in vain.

## LXXII

In no way Fortune aids him : she would seem  
Her smiles, from his endeavours, to withdraw.  
Meanwhile becomes his anguish so extreme,  
That in it they almost his death foresaw ;  
But touched, his guardian angel, in that hour,  
Culled upon Ida's sides fresh dittany,  
A crested plant that bears a purple flower,  
In whose young leaves a thousand virtues lie.

## LXXIII

Well mother Nature to the mountain goats  
Teaches the hidden virtue it contains,  
When, stricken thro' their soft and shaggy coats,  
Deep in their sides the feathered shaft remains.  
This, tho' in regions far remote it grew,  
Plucked in a moment his good angel hath,  
And, unperceived, its healing juices threw  
In the prepared and medicated bath.

## LXXIV

And holy lymph in Lydia's fountain found,  
And panacea in the water poured,  
Which the sage sprinkling on the captain's wound,  
The arrow issued of its own accord.  
Staunched is the blood, the deadly pains depart  
From out his leg, his strength returns, he stands :  
Then Erotimus cried : ' No master art  
Hath thee restored, nor these poor mortal hands !

## LXXV

'A greater power thee saves : At God's command  
Came here an angel, made for thee a leech ;  
I see the signs of his celestial hand.  
Arm ! arm ! Why pause ? Arm, arm, and mount the breach.'  
Greedy for fight, the pious cavalier  
Round his healed leg his crimson cuishes clasped,  
Brandished aloft his formidable spear,  
Laced up his helm, and shield abandoned grasped ;

## LXXVI

And from the entrenchments, flanked by thousands, rode,  
Whom towards the battered town once more he led ;  
The heavens above became a dusty cloud,  
The earth beneath all trembled from their tread.  
But when afar the adverse forces viewed  
His near approach, a shudder cold as ice  
Ran thro' their bones, and froze their very blood ;  
Then Godfred raised his voice, and shouted thrice.

## LXXVII

Those haughty tones his loyal people knew,  
And, roused by his exciting battle-cry,  
Resume their forward movement, and anew  
To dash aloft and scale the ramparts try.  
But the fierce couple had not failed to reach  
The rifted ruins ; there had made a stand,  
Defending, stubbornly, the open breach  
'Gainst bold Tancredi and his gallant band.

## LXXVIII

Here, scorning danger, and with lowering front,  
Came sheathed in steel the Paladin of France,  
And, seeing Arganté in the battle's brunt,  
Against him hurled his iron-headed lance.  
With him no mural engine could compare,  
To launch the spear, or massy stone propel ;  
The knotty timber thundered thro' the air,  
And on Arganté's upraised buckler fell.

## LXXIX

The buckler opened to the piercing ash,  
Not ev'n his coat of mail resist it could ;  
It tore thro' all his armour with a crash,  
Nor paused till dyed in Saracenic blood.  
But the Circassian from his flesh plucked out  
The steel-bound lance, regardless of the pain,  
And hurled it back to Godfred, with a shout,  
' Take back your arms ; I give them you again.'

## LXXX

By the known path flew and flew back the spear,  
Bearer of mischief first, of vengeance now ;  
But haply missed the Christian cavalier,  
Who, stooping down, escaped the intended blow,  
Which pierced Sigiero, his devoted squire,  
Deep in the throat ; he deeming it no grief  
To leave Heaven's light, and the Sun's golden fire,  
And die in place of his beloved chief.

## LXXXI

At the same moment mighty Solyman  
With a huge stone struck down the Norman knight,  
Who, writhing from intolerable pain,  
Spun like a top while falling : the sad sight  
Magnanimous Godfred could no longer bear  
Unmoved, unruffled, but, with sword in hand,  
Rushed to close quarters, and with dauntless air  
High o'er the smoking ruins took his stand.

## LXXXII

Then dire had been the strife where none would yield,  
And he had surely done most wondrous things,  
Had not advancing night the world concealed  
Beneath the gloomy horror of her wings,  
And her pacific shadows interposed  
'Mid wretched mortals' rage. Thus from the fray  
Prince Godfred ceased, and then retired ; thus closed  
The deadly struggles of that bloody day.

## LXXXIII

But ere the pious Bouillon left the field,  
He made them bring the sick and wounded back,  
Nor to the enemy would his engines yield,  
But safe preserved them from a fresh attack ;  
Safe, too, returned with them the monster tower,  
Especial terror of the Pagan foes,  
Tho' it was likewise damaged by the shower  
Of arrowy sleet and rock's repeated blows.



## LXXXIV

'Scaped from the many perils that prevail,  
A place of safety it now sought to gain ;  
But, as a gallant ship, which in full sail  
The billows scorns, and sweeps the boisterous main,  
Staves in her side when near the wished-for shore,  
On hidden rocks or treacherous quicksands cast ;  
Or as a steed, all dangerous passes o'er,  
Stumbles when near sweet home, and falls at last ;

## LXXXV

So tripped the tower ; for on that side which lay  
Exposed the most to the rock's dire assault,  
Two wheels so injured were, that, giving way,  
The nodding ruin was obliged to halt :  
But the attendant escort, with all those  
That rolled it thither, propped it up until  
The smiths, who hastened to assist them, close  
Its wounds with practised and ingenious skill.

## LXXXVI

Thus Godfred ordered, who desired to see  
The work completed ere a day should pass,  
And all the approaches occupying, he  
The guards disposed around the lofty mass.  
But in the city they could plainly hear  
The hum of voices and the hammers fall,  
Could see the lights of thousand torches there ;  
From which they knew—at least suspected all.



## CANTO XII.

### I

'TWAS night ; nor yet had the exhausted hosts  
Refreshment taken in the arms of sleep ;  
But here the Franks, alert upon their posts,  
A sharp look-out around the workmen keep ;  
There, the defences nodding to their fall,  
The busy Pagans hasten to repair,  
And to make good the breaches in the wall :  
The sick and maimed employ their common care.

### II

Their wounds at length being bandaged, and complete  
Part of the work commanded for the night,  
They leave the rest, since now to slumber sweet  
A deeper shade and greater calm invite.  
Yet could not thus the warrior maid appease  
Her soul, athirst for honour and for praise ;  
She work solicits when the others cease,  
And, joined by Arganté, to herself thus says :

## III

'Arganté and King Solyman to-day  
Great marvels truly have performed ; alone,  
They have thro' countless masses made their way,  
And the Franks' mighty engines overthrown ;  
The highest merit I can vaunt is, I  
Made distant warfare, sheltered in a tower—  
Successful archer, that I can't deny.  
Can woman, then, do this, and nothing more ?

## IV

'Twere better far, in mount or forest glade,  
Against wild beasts to launch my darts and spears,  
Than, where a manly valour is displayed,  
To show myself a girl 'mid cavaliers.  
Why not again the dress of woman wear,  
If worthy, or in cloister pass my days ?'  
Thus communes with herself ; at length the fair,  
Great things resolving, to Arganté says :

## V

'Long time it is that fierce and strange desires,  
Undaunted chief, my troubled spirit fill ;  
Nor can I tell if God the thought inspires,  
Or man creates an idol of his will :  
Outside the entrenchments of the accursed Giaour  
Behold yon watch-fires ; there, with fearless breast,  
With fire and sword, I'll go and burn the tower.  
Could I but this, to Heaven I leave the rest.

## VI

‘But should it happen that the Fates above  
To my return oppose their fixed decree,  
Of one who has been a father in his love,  
And of my maids, I leave the charge to thee ;  
Find means to send back to far Egypt’s land  
That poor old man, and each disconsolate dame.  
For God’s sake do this : at thy generous hand  
His age, their sex, may well compassion claim.’

## VII

Amazed, Arganté felt his throbbing breast  
Beat faster from the stimulus of fame.  
‘What ! wilt thou go, and leave me with the rest  
Of the vile crowd, to my undying shame ?  
Shall I enjoy, beyond the reach of harms,  
To watch the flames and curling smoke ?’ he saith.  
‘No, no, Clorinda ; if allied in arms,  
I’ll share thy risks, thy glory, and thy death.

## VIII

‘I have a heart, too, that despises death,  
And deems that life is well exchanged for fame.’  
‘To it, just title,’ the fair warrior saith,  
‘By thy magnanimous sortie thou canst claim.  
I am but woman, and my death were nought,  
Nor loss would bring ; but should Arganté fall  
(Nay, Heaven forbid the inauspicious thought !),  
Who would remain to guard the invested wall ?’

## IX

‘ Fallacious pleas,’ the cavalier replied,  
‘ Against my fixed resolve you idly use ;  
I’ll follow, if you will consent to guide,  
But will precede, fair dame, if you refuse.’  
This point being settled, to the king they went,  
Who them received while seated at divan ;  
When thus Clorinda : ‘ Gracious sire, consent  
To view with favourable eyes our plan.

## X

‘ Arganté, here, has vowed to burn the great  
And lofty tower, nor vain will be his boast ;  
I will with him, O king ; we only wait  
Till into sleep fatigue allures yon host.’  
At that the king raised up his hands on high,  
While o’er his wrinkled cheeks sweet tears ran down :  
‘ Praised be thy name, O Thou that turn’st thine eye  
Upon thy servants, and preserv’st my crown.

## XI

‘ Fall it will not, nor does my heart despair,  
While such brave souls unite in its defence ;  
But how can I, you justly honoured pair,  
Your merits praise enough, or recompense ?  
Let Fame proclaim your praises, and record  
Your deathless actions in immortal strains ;  
The deed in part shall be its own reward,  
And part, no trifling share of our domains.’

## XII

Thus spoke the hoary-headed king, and strained  
 Now her, now him, most fondly to his breast ;  
 But Solymano, who was there, nor feigned  
 The noble jealousy his heart possessed,  
 Exclaimed: ' This sword shall match thine own, or show  
 Not far behind ; it is not worn in vain.'  
 ' Ah,' cried Clorinda, ' are we all to go ?  
 Who, if thou com'st with us, will then remain ?'

## XIII

With haught denial, and with look of pride,  
 Him to refuse, Arganté had prepared ;  
 But him the king forestalled, and first replied  
 To Solymano, with benign regard :  
 ' Ever the same art thou, magnanimous knight,  
 And aye consistent in thy bold career ;  
 Thou ne'er art wearied in the hour of fight,  
 Or daunted by appearances of fear.

## XIV

' And well I know, that going, thou hadst gained  
 Fresh laurels ; but, unfitting it appears  
 That all went forth, and none of you remained,  
 Who are my staunchest, noblest cavaliers.  
 Nor would I let these go, for we should spare  
 Such precious blood, if to our native land  
 The deed itself of less importance were,  
 Or could be trusted to another hand.

## XV

‘ But since, around the tower, a numerous crew,  
In its defence, keep guard on every side,  
So that we could not take it with a few,  
And many could not at this hour provide,—  
Let this bold couple, which now volunteers,  
And in like perils has so oft been thrown,  
Go in God’s name, and may success be theirs !  
Since worth a thousand are these two alone.

## XVI

‘ Thee, as befits thy royal rank, I pray,  
Within the gates with the others to retire ;  
And when (as I have firm conviction) they  
Return in safety, having waked the fire,  
Do thou repulse the foe, if in pursuit  
They approach the walls, and save them, and protect.  
Thus spoke one king ; the other, altho’ mute,  
Betrayed his secret chagrin at being checked.

## XVII

‘ May it please you wait,’ then sage Ismeno said,  
‘ To sally forth until a later hour,  
When I a fiery compound shall have made  
That will adhere to, and consume the tower.  
It then may hap perchance that part of those  
Who guard it, and surround, may slumbering be.  
This settled, each to his pavilion goes,  
To attend the fitting opportunity.

## XVIII

Clorinda now took off her snowy plume,  
 Nor blazoned arms or silver surcoat bore,  
 But a sad suit, prophetic of her doom,  
 Rusty and black as darkest midnight, wore ;  
 Deeming, concealed in such disguise, she could  
 Pass with more ease among the hostile spears.  
 Near her the eunuch, old Arsete, stood,  
 Who nursed her childhood from her tenderest years ;

## XIX 13-35 but

And dragging after her his aged frame,  
 And her steps following, wheresoe'er she stirred,  
 Had marked the change of armour, and became  
 'Ware of the grievous perils she incurred.  
 He showed his hair, gray in her service made ;  
 His former cares as arguments he used ;  
 He wept distracted, and, heart-broken, prayed  
 That she the emprise would leave ; but she refused.

## XX

At length he said : ' Since thus more obstinate  
 Becomes your wayward spirit in its ill,  
 Nor doth my tears or age commiserate,  
 My warm entreaties or compassionate will,  
 I will more plainly speak, and thou shalt hear  
 Of thy condition things before unknown ;  
 Then to thy plan or my advice adhere.'  
 Intent she looked, as he continued on :



## XXI

‘ With prosperous sway o’er Ethiopia reigned,  
And still perhaps reigns there, Prince Senapus, who  
The holy laws of Mary’s Son maintained,  
And them maintained his swarthy people too.  
There, as a Pagan slave, did I preside  
O’er maidens, whom to manage was my duty,  
Being made attendant on the royal bride ;  
Brown she was, yes—but brown destroys not beauty.

## XXII

‘ Her spouse adored her, but suspicion’s frost  
Equalled the intensity of love’s ardent fire,  
And many a pang that frantic passion cost  
His tortured breast, and did such force acquire,  
That he concealed her from all mortal eyes ;  
Nay, grudged ev’n those that peer from heaven’s bright zone.  
She ne’er rebelled, but, humble, chaste, and wise,  
Made her lord’s fancies and delights her own.

## XXIII

‘ With figures that a piteous story told,  
Her chamber walls illuminated were :  
Near where a dragon lay, her locks all gold,  
Her cheeks all roses, stood a maid most fair ;  
A knight had struck the dragon with his spear,  
And at his feet the blood-bathed monster laid ;  
Here oft she knelt, and mourned with many a tear  
Her secret errors, and to Jesus prayed.

## XXIV

‘ Pregnant, meanwhile, a little girl she bore,  
Thyself –and thou as driven snow wert fair ;  
Alarmed she was, and marvelled greatly o’er  
Thy colour strange, as of some monster rare.  
At length she planned thy birth should be concealed,  
Knowing the king’s unbounded jealousies,  
Since the fair colour thy fair face revealed  
Had proved her faith’s unfairness in his eyes.

## XXV

‘ And in thy stead, born a short time before,  
A Moorish infant to the king was shown ;  
But since the place where she was hid, the tower,  
Was occupied by maids and me alone,  
To me, who loved her well and was her slave,  
Thee unbaptized she gave with her own hand ;  
Nor thee in baptism’s waters could she lave,  
As such was not the custom of the land.

## XXVI

‘ Thee, weeping, she committed to my care,  
And charged to nurture in some distant place ;  
But how describe her anguish, her despair,  
Or how redoubled was each last embrace ?  
Tears drowned her kisses, sobs and deep-drawn sighs  
Choked her laments ; at length about to part,  
With face upturned to heaven, “ O God,” she cries,  
“ Who know’st all secrets, and canst read my heart,

## XXVII

‘ If that immaculate is, and undefiled  
My nuptial bed, and these frail limbs of mine,  
Not for myself I pray, who am reviled  
By sins unnumbered in thy sight divine;  
But spare, ah spare, this innocent, to whom  
A churl her mother of her breast must be;  
From other sources may her fortune come,  
Nor me resemble but in chastity.

## XXVIII

‘ And thou, blest warrior, that didst snatch the maid  
From the fierce dragon’s sacrilegious hold,  
If on thy altar I have tapers laid,  
Or odorous incense offered up, or gold,  
Do thou for her with such effieience pray,  
That, faithful, she aye turn to thee for aid.”  
Emotion choked her breath, she swooned away,  
And pallid death was in her face portrayed.

## XXIX

‘ My tears flowed freely, as receiving thee  
I bore thee off ’mid leaves and flowers concealed,  
In a small basket, but so dextrously,  
That not to mortal was the fact revealed :  
Unknown I went, when passing through a wood  
Black from forbidding shade, to my surprise  
I saw a tigress coming where I stood,  
Wild threats and fury gleaming in her eyes.

## XXX

‘ I sprang upon a tree, so smit with dread,  
And thee, poor child, upon the sward forsook ;  
The horrid beast then, turning her proud head,  
Approached and fixed on thee a searching look ;  
Nathless her murderous instincts she repressed,  
And her aspect became most meek and mild,  
And drawing near, with her huge tongue caressed  
Your tiny form : you patted her and smiled.

## XXXI

‘ And as with her you fearless ’gan to play,  
And your small hand upon her muzzle placed,  
She offered you her teats, as is the way  
Of nurses, and disposed them for your taste ;  
And you did suck. As I the scene descried,  
I stared like one that some strange portent viewed ;  
But when her milk your wants had satisfied,  
She left and sought the covert of the wood.

## XXXII

‘ I straight jumped down, and, seizing thee, returned  
To where my footsteps first directed were.  
And in a little burg some time sojourned,  
There brought thee up in secresy, and there  
With thee remained till the revolving sun  
Had sixteen months to weary mortals brought :  
To lisp forth half-formed words thou hadst begun,  
And on the ground uncertain footprints wrought.

## XXXIII

‘ But having reached that period when the old  
Decline in strength and hasten towards the grave,  
Rich to repletion with thy mother’s gold,  
Which, queen-like, she at my departure gave,  
I longed that roving sort of life to quit,  
And oft for my dear native country sighed ;  
I pined once more among old friends to sit,  
And cheer life’s winter at my own fireside.

## XXXIV

‘ Whence towards my native Egypt I disposed  
My homeward course, and thou my flight didst share ;  
Then reached a stream, but found myself enclosed  
By robbers here, and by the river there.  
How act ? Thou, burthen sweet, could not be left,  
Yet would I ’scape the threatened robbery ;  
I plunged in the stream, and while my right hand cleft  
The foaming flood, the left supported thee.

## XXXV

‘ Swift rolled its angry waters, and midway  
Whirled round in circling eddies ; but being thrown  
Into the centre of the vortex, they  
Whisked me, all helpless, round and dragged me down.  
I left thee then, but favouring currents bore  
And placed thee safely on the sandy beach ;  
The breeze, too, helped to carry thee ashore ;  
I, faint and panting, scarce the land could reach.

## XXXVI

‘ With joy I took thee up, but in the night,  
When Nature slept in silence most profound,  
Dreaming, I saw the figure of a knight  
Brandish a sword ; he menacingly frowned,  
And sternly cried, “ I charge thee to revere  
Her mother’s first injunctions unto thee ;  
Baptize this infant, who to Heaven is dear,  
And whose safe care entrusted is to me.

## XXXVII

‘ “ I guard her and defend ; ’twas I that gave  
Sense to the stream, compassion to the beast ;  
And woe ! if thou my solemn warning brave,  
Who am God’s messenger.” This said, he ceased.  
I, waking, rose, and from the spot withdrew  
With the first twinkle of the morning star ;  
But, the shade deeming false and my creed true,  
To have thee christened took no further care,

## XXXVIII

‘ Nor of thy mother’s wish : whence thou wast bred  
A Pagan, and I hid from thee the truth.  
Thou grew’st in years, hast nobly fought and bled,  
O’ercome thy sex and nature, and in youth  
Both fame and lands acquired. Thyself dost know  
What since that early period has occurred ;  
Thou know’st I have been thy slave and father too,  
And at thy side through hostile squadrons spurred.

## XXXIX

‘ But yester morn, at day-break’s earliest beam,  
Oppressed by slumber that resembled death,  
I saw the self-same figure in a dream ;  
More stern his look was, and with louder breath,  
“ Traitor ! ” he cried, “ behold Clorinda’s doom  
Approaches fast ; the hour is almost due.  
Mine she shall yet, in spite of thee, become ;  
The grief be thine : ” this said, away he flew.

## XL

‘ Take heed then, dearest, for the angered skies  
Menace thee with some strange misfortune soon :  
I know not how. Perhaps their threats arise  
That others should their fathers’ faith impugn ;  
Perhaps that faith is true. Then doff thy arms,  
Curb thy bold spirit, nor with Heaven contest.’  
He ceased, and wept ; she, too, felt strange alarms,  
Since such another dream her heart oppressed.

## XLI

Still brightening up her brow, she said at last :  
‘ I’ll hold that faith which I consider true,  
But o’er which thou the veil of doubt wouldst cast,  
That faith which with my nurse’s milk I drew ;  
No fear shall turn me from this enterprise  
(To draw back now no generous spirit could) ;  
No, not if Death himself, in fiercest guise  
That mortal eye e’er saw, before me stood.’

## XLII

She then consoled him ; but as the hour drew nigh  
 To execute her vaunt, the undaunted fair  
 Went off and joined Arganté, her ally,  
 Who the grave perils wished with her to share :  
 Ismeno spurred their innate courage, which  
 Flowed of itself, and ere they sought the field,  
 Gave them two balls, of sulphur made and pitch,  
 With light in lamp of hollow brass concealed.

## XLIII

X  
Softly they steal, 'neath cover of the night,  
 And down the hill with rapid footsteps go,  
 Then reach the spot where towers, in giant height,  
 The formidable turret of the foe ;  
 Their full hearts throb with feverish desire,  
 Nor can contain the rage that boils within ;  
 Fierce passions prompt to deeds of blood and fire,  
 When the guard challenges—' The countersign ! '

## XLIV

They still proceed in silence, whence the guard,  
 'To arms ! to arms !' shouts with redoubled force ;  
 At this, concealment the bold pair discard,  
 Nor tardy now is their adventurous course.  
 As Heaven's artillery or mortal shells  
 Fire, thunder, burst, so for each daring Turk  
 To start, arrive, cut down the sentinels,  
 Ope and rush in, was but a moment's work.



## XLV

Not arms of thousands, nor a thousand blows,  
Could stop them from effecting their desire ;  
The lights concealed they hastily uncloze,  
And set the fierce combustibles on fire,  
Then spread and wrap them round the frame of oak.  
But how describe from every quarter how  
Crept and increased the flames, and how the smoke,  
In lurid volumes, stained Heaven's stainless brow !

## XLVI

Mixed with its turbid wreaths, to heaven aspire  
Great globes of flame, in many a tortuous maze ;  
The rising wind, too, fans the raging fire,  
Uniting all in one tremendous blaze.  
Prepared, the Christians seize their arms, since all  
That burst of light with sudden fear dismays ;  
The dreaded sides of the huge engine fall,  
And one short hour destroys the work of days. ]

## XLVII

Meanwhile two squadrons of the Christians came  
With prompt despatch to where the fire arose.  
'Your blood,' Arganté shouts, 'shall quench that flame,'  
And turned with threatening front upon his foes.  
Still inch by inch with fair Clorinda yields,  
With her to gain the ridge's top intent.  
From rains streams less increase, than o'er the fields  
The crowds collect, and mount with them the ascent.

## XLVIII

Wide open lay the Golden Gate, and there, (2)  
Girt by his armed legions, stood the king,  
From their great feat to welcome the bold pair,  
If favouring fortune should them homeward bring.  
Both sprang upon the threshold ; on their track  
Precipitously dashed the Christian rout ;  
But Solymano charged and drove them back :  
The gate then fell, but shut Clorinda out.

## XLIX

Alone excluded was the warrior maid,  
For as they barred the portal she had gone,  
With cruel purpose and enfeigned blade,  
To punish one who struck her—Armon.  
One stroke sufficed to lay the offender low,  
Nor knew Arganté she had left his side,  
Since the fierce fight, dense air, and surging foe,  
His sight and other senses stupefied.

## L

But when her angered spirit she had quenched  
With the Frank's blood, and to reflect was led,  
Saw the gate closed, and she herself intrenched  
By hostile swords, she gave herself for dead.  
Still noticing she was observed by none,  
To save her life a novel thought arose ;  
She feigned to be a Christian, and, as one  
Unnoticed, stole among her mortal foes.

## LI

Then as a wolf slinks cowering to his lair,  
Some dark deed done, and shuns the beaten way,  
So, favoured by the darkness of the air  
And wild confusion, she retired away.  
Alone Tancredi the occurrence knew ;  
For he, arriving but a short time back,  
The combat reached as Arimon she slew,  
Then watched her, marked, and followed on her track.

## LII

He wished to prove her strength in arms ; a knight  
He deemed her, worthy with himself to mate ;  
But she went winding round the rugged height,  
To gain admission at some other gate.  
But as behind the impetuous Tancred sped,  
His armour rattled, whence, with angry breath,  
Upon him turning, 'Why such haste?' she said ;  
'What bring'st thou me?' He answered, 'War and Death.'

## LIII

'War thou shalt have, and Death,' Clorinda cried ;  
'I'll give thee both.' This said, the maiden halts ;  
And seeing his foe on foot, with knightly pride  
At once Tancredi from his destrier vaults,  
And having drawn his broadsword, she her brand  
(Their self-love sharpened and their anger fired),  
They for the dread encounter take their stand,  
Like two young bulls by jealous rage inspired.

## LIV

Worthy those deeds, instead of envious gloom,  
Of crowded lists and clearest sunshine were.  
O Night, that hidest in thy lightless womb  
And in oblivion screenest feats so rare,  
Grant that I draw them thenceforth, and consign  
To future ages their full blaze of light,  
That their fame live, and thro' their glory shine  
Undying memory of thy darkness—Night !

## LV

Retire they don't, or foil, or parry—no ;  
Nor plays dexterity the slightest part ;  
Not theirs the full, the feigned, the cautious blow ;  
Their rage—the darkness mocks the use of art ;  
Clash with discordant resonance their brands,  
As steel meets steel ; their feet their ground maintain :  
Moveless are they, while ever move their hands,  
And not a stroke or thrust descends in vain.

## LVI

Offence resentment to revenge incites,  
And vengeance taken the offence renews ;  
Whence aye fresh causes goad the furious knights,  
And in each stroke fresh virulence infuse.  
And as more close the cruel contest grows,  
Finding how unavailing is the blade,  
They used the pommel, and with desperate blows  
To smash each other's helm and shield essayed.

## LVII

Three times the cavalier the maiden grasps  
In his strong arms, and thrice the maiden too,  
From their tenacious knots, herself unclasps—  
Knots not of lover, but of savage foe.  
Once more they use their sabres, which they stain  
In many a crimson wound ; then, out of breath,  
With one consent, both he and she refrain,  
O'erstrained, exhausted, from the work of death.

## LVIII

Each now returned his foe's defiant gaze,  
While leaning, breathless, on the falchion's hilt ;  
Already the last star had paled its rays  
Before the dawn, which Orient splendour gilt,  
When Tancred, seeing that more profusely ran  
His foeman's life-blood than his own, repress  
He could not his delight. Vain, puffed-up man !  
Elated by each semblance of success.

## LIX

Fool ! why this joy ? Lost, lost in endless pain  
Will be thy triumph, when the truth appears ;  
Thine eyes will pay (if life the shock sustain),  
For every drop of blood, a sea of tears.  
As, without speaking, each the other eyed,  
The blood-stained knights obtained a brief repose ;  
Breaking at length the silence, Tancred cried  
That his opponent should his name disclose.

## LX

'Tis hard that we, unseen by mortal eyes,  
Should so much valour uselessly display ;  
Since, then, invidious destiny denies  
Praise, or a witness adequate, I pray  
(If prayers can find acceptance from a foe),  
Thee to reveal thy name and quality,  
That, conqueror or conquered, I may know  
Who will adorn my death or victory.'

## LXI

Fiercely she answered : ' You demand in vain  
What it is not my habit to unfold ;  
But whosoe'er I be, one of the twain  
That fired your mighty turret you behold.'  
With wrath her speech inflamed the Christian knight,  
Who shouted : ' This in evil hour you tell ;  
Your silence, no less than your words, invite  
Me to revenge, discourteous infidel.'

## LXII

Rage to their hearts returned at this, and led  
Once more to battle the exhausted knights.  
Fierce fray ! whence skill is banished, strength is dead,  
And in their place alone brute fury fights.  
Oh, what wide bloody gaps the falchion rived  
In their soft flesh, thro' steel and quilted vest ;  
And if frail life in either still survived,  
Despite it was that bound it to the breast.

## LXIII

As the Ægean, tho' the storm be o'er,  
That had convulsed it to its deepest caves,  
Not tranquil yet, retains the roll and roar  
In its still big and agitated waves ;  
Thus, tho' with loss of blood that vigour waned,  
Which put at first such life into each blow,  
Yet still their former energy remained,  
Impelled by which they madly fight ; but, lo !

## LXIV

The hour, the fatal hour at length arrives,  
To quit this life that bold Clorinda should :  
Through her fair bosom the sword's point he drives,  
Which there infixed drinks greedily her blood.  
A reeking torrent deluges her vest,  
Which, stiff with tissue of embroidered gold,  
Confined with yielding tenderness her breast ;  
She feels death near, nor can herself uphold.

## LXV

He, threat'ning, follows up his victory,  
Forcing and pressing the transfixèd maid,  
Who, as she fell in mortal agony,  
Her last words uttered, her last wish conveyed ;  
Words a new spirit prompted unto her,  
Spirit of Hope, of Charity, of Faith,  
By God Himself inspired, who, tho' she were  
In life a rebel, willed her true in death.

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## LXIX

Her snowy face a lovely pallor wears ;  
Of lilies, blent with violets, such the hue ;  
Her eyes are fixed on heaven, and Heaven appears,  
With tender ruth, the penitent to view.  
Then, raising up her cold and ungloved arm,  
She gave the knight her hand, as earnest deep  
Of peace in lieu of words, and in that form  
The maiden passed away, as if asleep.

## LXX

But, seeing her pure and gentle soul depart,  
He, with it, lost the strength he had attained,  
And yielded up dominion of his heart  
To sorrow passionate and unrestrained.  
It froze his life's blood, and a deathlike shade  
O'er his wan face and flickering spirit threw :  
The living languishes most like the dead,  
In blood, in silence, attitude, and hue.

## LXXI

And sure his life, in that despairing mood,  
Bursting its frail defence's fragile thread,  
Had her emancipated soul pursued,  
That just before its deathless wings had spread ;  
But that, by chance, a troop of Franks arrived,  
Whom water, or such want, had thither led :  
They took the maid and warrior, who survived  
Scarce in himself, and who in her was dead.

## LXXII

Their chief, tho' distant, by his armour, knew  
The Christian prince, and thither straightway went :  
He recognised the lifeless beauty too,  
And mourned the strange, unhappy accident ;  
Yet would not leave to savage wolves a prey  
(Tho' Pagan deeming it) her lovely corse,  
But both their bodies made his men convey,  
And to Tancredi's quarters bent his course.

## LXXIII

Nor was the slow and easy motion felt  
By the unconscious wounded cavalier,  
Whose moans declared that life within still dwelt ;  
That death had not yet ended his career :  
But the other voiceless, moveless mass of clay,  
Too clearly proved the vital spark had fled ;  
Thus near but in two separate chambers they  
Were placed, the half-living warrior and the dead.

## LXXIV

Engaged on varied duties round the knight,  
A crowd of sympathising esquires stands,  
When lo ! returns to his faint eyes the light,  
He hears the voices, feels the soothing hands ;  
But still his mind, bewildered by the past,  
Of his return not certain, hung in doubt ;  
Stupid he stared, and recognised at last  
The squires, the room, then feebly faltered out ;

## LXXV

‘ Do I then breathe and live ? Still see the beams,  
The odious beams of this disastrous day ?  
That, witness of my dark misdoing, seems  
Against me by its presence to inveigh.  
Ah, timid, tardy hand ! why now not dare,  
Thou, so adept in all the ways of strife ?  
Foul minister of death ! why now forbear  
To cut the thread of this my guilty life ?

## LXXVI

‘ Pierce, pierce this breast ; and with thy cruel sword  
Complete the torture of thy martyred chief ;  
Perhaps tho’ used to actions so abhorred,  
Thou’dst deem it mercy thus to end my grief ;  
Then as a dread example I’ll remain,  
The wretched monster of unhappy love—  
A wretched monster, worthy of the pain  
That life itself will for the future prove.

## LXXVII

‘ My life I’ll pass ’mid torments and ’mid care ;  
Just Furies, they will my sad steps pursue ;  
The dark and lonely shadows I shall fear,  
Since they will ever bring my crime in view ;  
And the sun’s face with hate and horror seeing,  
I shall avoid as some reproachful elf ;  
Fearing myself, and from myself aye fleeing,  
I still shall aye be haunted by myself.

## LXXVIII

‘ But where—woe, woe is me !—ah, where remain  
The relics of that form so chaste, so fair?  
All that my fury left entire, has been,  
It may be, mangled by wild wolf or bear.  
Ah, prey too noble ! (ah, unfortunate maid ! )  
Ah, far too sweet—ah, far too precious feast !  
’Gainst whom the darkness and the wood arrayed  
My fatal falchion and the ravening beast.

## LXXIX

‘ But I will fly to where ye are, if ye  
Exist on earth, dear, darling relics, still ;  
But should it hap on your fair limbs (ah me ! )  
Wild beast has glutted his bloodthirsty will,  
The self-same jaws that swallowed, the same tomb  
That them engulphed, my sepulchre shall be.  
Ah, doubly honoured and most welcome doom,  
That will unite me, tho’ in death, with thee !’

## LXXX

Thus spoke the wretched knight, but when he hears  
That in his tent her precious body lies,  
His gloomy aspect in a moment clears,  
Like cloud o’er which a flash of lightning flies.  
Then raising up his limbs’ enfeebled weight  
From off the couch where they supported lay,  
Scarce able to move, with vacillating gait,  
Thither the silent mourner bends his way.

## LXXXI

But when he came, and saw in that fair breast  
The ghastly wound his murderous hand had given,  
And that no lustre her wan face possessed,  
Like a nocturnal tho' unclouded heaven,  
He trembled so that he had fallen, if aid  
Had been at greater distance from the spot.  
' Ah face, that canst ev'n sweeten death,' he said,  
' Thou canst not sweeten more my bitter lot !

## LXXXII

' Ah, lovely hand, that didst outstretch to me  
The tender pledge of friendship and of peace,  
How do I come, and how, alas ! find thee ?  
And you, chaste, delicate members, are not these  
The hateful and intolerable sign  
Of my ferocious rage and cruelty ?  
Ye stony eyes match well these hands of mine—  
They gave the wounds that ye still live to see.

## LXXXIII

' Tearless ye see them too ; then stream, my blood !  
Stream, since my frozen tears refuse to flow.'  
Sudden he ceased, grown desperate, nor could  
Resist the wish to end by death his woe.  
He tore his bandages away ; red rain  
In streams poured from each irritated wound,  
And died he had, if from the poignant pain  
That made him swoon, new life he had not found.

## LXXXIV

Placed on the couch again, his fluttering soul  
Back to its odious offices returns ;  
But his sad fortune and excessive dole  
Each from the tongue of busy rumour learns ;  
Thither at once the pious chief repairs,  
And thither throngs each true and anxious friend ;  
But no grave counsels, no persuasive prayers,  
Could his soul's settled stubborn sorrow bend.

## LXXXV

As mortal wound that in a delicate limb  
Angers if touched, and feels still greater smart,  
So the sweet comforts that surrounded him  
Increased still more the anguish of his heart ;  
But venerable Peter, like good herds  
That tend their sickly lambs with kindly care,  
Rebuked his frenzy with stern, solemn words,  
And tried to check, by counsel, his despair.

## LXXXVI

' O Tancred, Tancred ! how thyself unlike ;  
How changed the early promptings of thy mind.  
What stops thine ear ? What clouds of darkness strike  
Thine eyes, and render thee so lost, so blind ?  
This thy misfortune is the work of God ;  
Dost Him not see, His gracious words not hear,  
Who the lost path, by thee once haply trod,  
Points out, and chides thy fatuous career ?

## LXXXVII

‘ He now recalls thee to that dignity  
Of cavalier of Christ in this Crusade,  
Which thou hast left, (unworthy change!) to be  
Th’ inglorious lover of a Pagan maid.  
Ah, blest misfortune ! thy compassionate God  
Gives thee thyself the means of grace to choose,  
And thy mad faults corrects with gentle rod.  
His gracious offer wilt thou then refuse ?

## LXXXVIII

‘ Refuse, ungrateful, Heaven’s salubrious gift,  
And against God thy puny wrath display ?  
Ah, wretched Tancred ! why thus plunge adrift,  
And to such unchecked hopelessness give way ?  
On dread eternity’s tremendous brink,  
Thou hang’st at mercy of His slightest breath—  
See’st thou it not ? Ah, see, I pray, and think,  
And curb that grief which leads to double death.’

## LXXXIX

He ceased. That second death raised up such fear  
As for the first allayed the wish ; whence he  
To those blest words of comfort lent an ear,  
And somewhat calmed his grief’s intensity ;  
But still at times he wept beyond control,  
And, unrestrained, bewailed his hapless doom ;  
Himself addressing now, now her freed soul,  
Which perhaps listened from its heavenly home.

## XC

To her at rise, to her at sunset hour,  
He prays, he weeps, he calls with faltering tongue :  
Like nightingale, from whose deserted bower  
Hard-hearted churl has filched her unfledged young,  
Mourning the sad lone nights, her piteous cries  
Thro' the still air and silent forest peal.  
At length, as day breaks, he half shuts his eyes,  
O'er which, still weeping, ruthful slumbers steal.

## XCI

When dreaming, lo ! in vesture star-inwrought,  
Appeared the form of his lamented love ;  
But much more beautiful than erst, she brought  
With her old look a splendour from above ;  
She seemed, with tenderest sympathy, to dry  
His streaming eyes ; she seemed to whisper, ' See  
How lovely, how beatified am I ;  
Calm, then, thy grief, dear faithful friend, for me,

## XCII

' Since thou hast made me such. 'Twas thy mistake  
That took me from the living in thy sphere ;  
'Twas thy devotion did me worthy make  
To reach my God, and sit with angels here ;  
And, 'mid these realms of heavenly bliss, I'll pray  
That here a place He will to thee assign,  
Where, in the sunshine of eternal day,  
Thou mayst enjoy their loveliness and mine.



## XCIII

‘ If, then, thou grudgest not thyself such bliss,  
Nor art by sensual madness led astray,  
Live ; for I love thee (and acknowledge this),  
As far as love a child of earth I may.’  
Thus speaking, rapture sparkled in her gaze,  
And did a more than mortal light impart ;  
Then, shrouded in the halo of her rays,  
She left, fresh cheer infusing in his heart.

## XCIV

Consoled, he woke, and to the prudent care  
Of skilled physicians his worn frame resigned,  
Then orders gave to its last home to bear  
That form which erst such noble life enshrined ;  
And if her tomb was not with marble decked,  
Or by the chisel of skilled sculptor chased,  
Chosen at least was stone and architect,  
As far as time permitted to his haste.

## XCV

Illumed by torches in extended line,  
With noble pomp her body was conveyed ;  
Her arms suspended from a branchless pine,  
In form of trophied emblems, were displayed.  
But when the still enfeebled cavalier  
His limbs could raise upon the following day,  
With ruth and reverence filled, he went to where,  
Interred, her loved and honoured relics lay.

## XCVI

And having reached the loved, the fatal tomb,  
Where his own living soul imprisoned lies,  
Cold, faltering, mute, with look of deepest gloom,  
On the dull stone he riveted his eyes.  
Bursting at length into a flood of tears,  
He faintly sighed, then feebly faltered out :  
' Oh, stone, which this my loving heart reveres,  
That hast my flame within, my tears without.

## XCVII

' Not Death thou dost in thy cold clasp conceal,  
But quick warm ashes, where lies buried Love ;  
In thee too well my wonted fires I feel,  
Which, if less sweet, not less impassioned prove.  
Ah, take these sighs, and these my kisses take !  
Thus drowned in tears, they will my grief attest,  
And since I cannot, give them for my sake  
To the loved relics that within thee rest.

## XCVIII

' Give them ; for if her lovely spirit e'er  
Upon her lovely relics cast her eyes,  
No anger 'gainst my boldness she will bear,  
Since hate and anger dwell not in the skies.  
In the sole thought she did my crime condone,  
My heart still beats amid such misery ;  
She knows that guilty was my hand alone,  
Nor grieves if loving her I lived—so die !

## XCIX

‘Yes, loving her, I’ll die. Ah, happy day,  
Whene’er it come ; but happier, happier far,  
If, as now round thee loitering, I may,  
Within thy womb, lie side by side with her.  
In heaven may our united souls abide ;  
May our frail ashes share the self-same tomb,  
And death possess what was to life denied :  
Ah, could I hope for this, how blest my doom !’

## C

Meanwhile of her untimely fate and fall  
Confused reports and busy whispers rise,  
Till they gain certainty, and spread ; thro’ all  
The affrighted town the unwelcome rumour flies,  
Mingled with women’s wail and shrieks of ire,  
As tho’ by storm Jerusalem were ta’en,  
And the fierce foe laid waste with sword and fire  
Each hallowed dwelling and each holy fane.

## CI ✓

But on Arsete, whose sad face appears  
The picture of despair, are turned all eyes ;  
He like the rest did not dissolve in tears  
Grief, which in him too indurated is.  
But with foul dust begrimed his silver hair,  
And beat distractedly his face and breast ;  
Now while on him the assembled people stare,  
Forth stepped Arganté, and the crowd addressed :

## CII ✓

‘ Much did I wish to follow the bold maid,  
Soon as I knew that she remained outside,  
And ran at once to offer every aid,  
Nor from her destiny my own divide.  
Where did I fail in act or speech ? I prayed  
The king to unbar the portal ; but in vain :  
No reason moved, no warm entreaty swayed,  
Him who doth all with power despotic rein.

## CIII ✓

‘ Ah, had I then gone forth, I either would  
The warrior maid have rescued from her foes,  
Or, where the earth was crimsoned with her blood,  
Life ended by a memorable close.  
But what, alas ! could I do more ?—what try ?  
Against my counsel man and God were set ;  
Clorinda’s death predestined was ; but I  
Can ne’er what to her memory’s due forget.

## CIV

‘ Hear, Salem, what Arganté doth declare !  
Hear it, O Heaven, and if I fail, do thou  
Blast me with lightning ! I deep vengeance swear  
’Gainst the Frank murderer ; nay, more, I vow,  
Ne’er from my settled purpose to depart,  
Nor e’er this falchion from my hip depose  
Till I have plunged it in Tancredi’s heart,  
And flung his felon carcass to the crows.’

## CV

Thus spoke Arganté ; his concluding words  
The assembled crowd saluted with applause ;  
For in their grief his vowed revenge affords  
Hope that his sabre will avenge her cause.  
Vain, idle oaths ! how opposite in all,  
To vaunt so lofty, the result will be ;  
Since in like combat will he 'neath him fall,  
O'er whom he boasts in fancied victory.



## CANTO XIII.

### I

SCARCE had the wall-breaching immense machine  
In ashes fallen, than in his subtle breast  
New projects were concerted by Ismene,  
Whereby the town might more securely rest,  
By which prevent he might the attacking power  
From getting fresh material from the wood ;  
So that they could not make another tower,  
Nor more molest the battered city could.

### II

At no great distance from the Christian tents,  
'Twixt lonely vales, a lofty wood is found,  
Most thick with antique horrid timber, whence  
Are cast unwholesome shadows all around ;  
Here, when the sun shines brightest from on high,  
Uncertain, dull, and colourless the light ;  
Such as seems doubtful in a clouded sky,  
If night to day succeeds, or day to night.

## III

But when the sun goes down, o'ershadowing, rise  
Night, darkness, clouds, and horrors, that appear.  
Like Acheron's deepest gloom ; they blind the eyes  
And fill all hearts with strange mysterious fear.  
No flocks nor herds, for pasture or for shade,  
Doth rustic here, or frightened shepherd guide ;  
Or traveller enter, save when he has strayed  
From the right road, but points and passes wide.

## IV

The witches hold their midnight revels here,  
Each with her lover ; o'er the clouds they float ;  
This a ferocious dragon doth appear,  
That wears the shape of shapeless mountain goat.  
Foul, shameless gathering, whom the attractive bait  
Of happiness allures by false delights,  
With lewd, indecent pomp to celebrate  
Banquets profane, and impious marriage rites.

## V

'Twas thus believed ; and of the natives none  
From that dread forest ever plucked a bough ;  
But Franks infringed it : 'twas the only one  
That furnished their immense machines. And now  
Here came the wizard, choosing the opportune  
Mysterious silence of the night as best—  
The very night of the same day—and soon  
Had formed his circle, and weird signs impressed.

## VI

With one foot bared, inside the circle's space,  
To mutter potent words he had begun ;  
Thrice to the Orient he turned round his face,  
And thrice to where declines the setting sun ;  
Thrice shook his wand, which from the tomb profound  
Could raise and animate the buried dead ;  
Thrice stamped his naked foot upon the ground,  
And then, with cry of dreadful import, said :

## VII

'Hear! Hear, O ye, whom from the stars above  
Heaven's thundering bolts hurled headlong down below ;  
And ye inhabitants of air, that move  
The raging whirlwind and the tempest strow ;  
And ye that to lost spirits minister  
Eternal torments, never-ending thrall.  
Inmates of hell, I summon you ; appear !  
And upon thee, their sovran lord, I call.

## VIII

'Take in your charge this forest, and control,  
As, numbered, I deliver them, each tree ;  
And as within the body dwells the soul,  
So let their trunks your habitations be ;  
That the Franks hence may fly, or stop at least  
At the first blow, afraid your wrath to meet.'  
The horrid imprecations, ere he ceased,  
None but an impious tongue would dare repeat.



## IX

At that the stars, with which fair Night adorns  
Her spangled canopy, their lustre paled ;  
The moon grew troubled, and withdrew her horns  
Beneath dark clouds, and kept her splendour veiled.  
Enraged, he 'gan his cries reiterate :  
'What ! spirits summoned, not obey my will ?  
Whence this delay ? why pause ? Perhaps ye wait  
For spell more powerful, or more secret still ?

## X

'I have not yet forgotten, from disuse,  
My cruel art's most efficacious aid ;  
Still, still my tongue is able to produce  
That dreadful sound which Pluto is afraid,  
Ev'n on his burning throne, to disobey,  
And which all hell doth with attention treat.  
I will—I will' . . . More he was going to say,  
But found the incantation was complete.

## XI

Thither flocked spirits countless, infinite ;  
Partly of those that through the welkin roam,  
Partly of those that to the realms of light  
Had from the earth's obscure abysses come ;  
Slowly, still trembling at the laws severe,  
That hindered them from bearing arms, but these  
Forbade them not the power of coming here,  
'Mid leaves to lie, and harbour in the trees.

## XII

As nought was wanting to complete his part,  
 O'erjoyed, the wizard sought the king's retreat.  
 'Cast all thy thoughts aside ; cheer up thy heart,  
 Since now secure, sire, is thy royal seat ;  
 Nor can the Christians; as they fondly deem,  
 Renew their engines to assault our gates.'  
 Thus having spoke, he, one by one, to him  
 The prosperous issue of his art relates.

## XIII ↓

Adding : ' Besides this great success of mine,  
 I have another reason for delight ;  
 Know then that in celestial Leo's sign  
 Soon will the Sun with fiery Mars unite ;  
 Whose flames no cooling zephyr will assuage,  
 No gentle dews, nor showers of grateful rain,  
 Since all prognostics in the heavens presage  
 Excessive drought throughout Judæa's plain.

## XIV ✓

' Whence we shall have such heats as ne'er oppress  
 Sahara's deserts or parched Ind's champagnes ;  
 Still in the city we shall feel them less,  
 Since water and such comforts it contains.  
 But on the adust, and far from pleasant soil,  
 The Franks will them be unable to endure,  
 And, first by Heaven o'ercome, an easy spoil  
 In their spent ranks the Egyptians will secure.

## XV

‘Thou, sitting still, shalt triumph o’er thy foes,  
Nor were it wise to tempt thy fortune more ;  
But if Arganté, who brooks no repose,  
And, tho’ well earned, despise it as of yore,  
And urge thee with his importunities,  
Thou must find means his ardour to restrain ;  
Since peace to thee will give the friendly skies,  
And deadly warfare with thy foes maintain.’

## XVI

On hearing this, the king felt quite assured  
That he no longer need the foeman fear ;  
And tho’ in parts the ramparts were secured,  
Where the rams struck with impulse most severe,  
Still with all that, incessant was his care  
To make them good where battered by their blows ;  
Employing all, both slaves and freedmen there ;  
The busy work with toil unceasing glows.

## XVII

Meanwhile the chief, who knew ’twas useless, willed  
From fresh attack on Salem to abstain,  
Until he could the greater tower rebuild,  
And the other engines were complete again ;  
So to the wood artificers he sent,  
Material for such purpose to select.  
At dawn of day they to the forest went,  
But terrors new their onward progress checked.

## XVIII

As simple children dare not raise their sight  
To where they deem strange shapes may present be,  
Or, as they tremble in the shadowy night,  
Fancying they prodigies and monsters see ;  
So feared the Franks, not knowing, as they gazed,  
The cause that such unusual fright imparts,  
If 'twas not fear, which greater monsters raised  
Than Sphinxes or Chimæras in their hearts.

## XIX

Back they return, and, timid and dismayed,  
Both words and things confuse so, that received  
With laughter was the terror they betrayed,  
Nor were the marvellous effects believed.  
Thither, at this, the zealous captain sent  
A strong detachment of selected hands  
No escort the rest, and give encouragement  
To them to execute his high commands.

## XX

These drawing nigh to where, in ambuscade,  
'Mid those wild horrors the foul demons lay,  
No sooner saw the black, funereal shade,  
Than turned to ice their very hearts. Still they  
Pushed boldly forward, veiling abject fear  
Beneath the mask of an audacious face,  
And had advanced, so that they now were near  
The dreaded entrance of the enchanted place,

## XXI

When, from the wood, there issued forth a sound,  
That seemed like rumbling of an earthquake's shocks :  
From it the south wind's whistling blasts redound,  
And wail of billows moaning amid rocks ;  
The hiss of dragon, and the growl of bear,  
Wolf's howl and lion's roar, the senses stun ;  
The rattling thunder and the trump you hear,  
Yet all these noises were expressed by one.

## XXII

Then grew the cheek of every Christian pale,  
And all betrayed a thousand marks of fright ;  
Nor reason could, nor discipline prevail,  
To urge them forward, or restrain their flight,  
Since all endeavours scant and powerless were,  
'Gainst the dread influence that appalled each breast.  
At last they fled ; and one, with awe-struck air,  
The fact excusing, thus the chief addressed :

## XXIII

' Not one there is, O prince ! that longer vaunts  
To fell yon wood ; it guarded is so well,  
That I believe, nay swear, within those plants  
Pluto transplanted has the realms of hell.  
Thrice must his heart with adamant be bound,  
Who dares regard it with unblenching eyes ;  
And dead his sense, who listens to the sound  
Of those dread noises and unearthly cries.'

## XXIV

Such was his tale. 'Mong those that chance brought there,  
Alcasto was, a man, as rumour saith,  
Who, of a fierce and stupid rashness, ne'er  
Quailed before mortal, and made light of death :  
Nor monster feared, how dread soe'er its form,  
Nor savage beast, the wildest of the plains ;  
Not earthquake, lightning, nor terrific storm,  
Nor aught more furious that the world contains.

## XXV

In scorn he tossed his head, and smiling stood,  
Then said : ' Where he dares not, to go I vaunt.  
Alone, I intend to fell this frightful wood,  
Which has of troubled dreams become the haunt.  
Not direst phantom shall prevent me—no !  
Nor bird's ill-omened screech, nor forest's yell ;  
Thro' those terrific alleys I will go,  
Aye, tho' they led me to the jaws of hell'

## XXVI

Thus boasted to the prince, and, undeterred,  
Took leave of him, and to the forest went ;  
Nor had he scarcely seen it, when he heard  
That strange new sound from its recesses sent.  
But his bold footsteps it arrested not ;  
He still advanced, contemptuous and composed,  
And would have passed the interdicted spot,  
But that by flames he was, or seemed, opposed.

## XXVII

The mighty fire increases ; in the form  
Of lofty walls the lurid flames extend,  
Girdling the forest with its fiery arm,  
The trees from all intruders to defend.  
The greater flames, aspiring upwards, wear  
The shape of lordly castellated halls ;  
And warlike engines were not wanting there,  
To guard this new-made Pandemonium's walls.

## XXVIII

Oh, what dread monsters there appeared to guard  
The lofty towers ! how terrible their look !  
Some grimly eyed him, some his passage barred  
With flaming arms, which they in menace shook.  
At last he fled, but still his flight was slow,  
Like that of lion wounded in the chase ;  
But still, 'twas flight ! Fear froze his bosom now,  
Until that moment an unknown disgrace.

## XXIX

Nor yet was conscious of his fear, but saw,  
When further on, the intolerable truth,  
Indignant and dismayed, while 'gan to gnaw  
His heart remorse with its envenomed tooth.  
Confounded, thence he slunk amid the crowd,  
Burning, yet mute from bitter shame ; nor dared  
Raise up those features, formerly so proud,  
To meet his peers' reproachful, cold regard.

## XXX

By Godfred summoned, he delays, and seeks  
Excuse still further to prolong delay ;  
Still goes, but slowly, with closed lips, or speaks  
As in their sleep unconscious dreamers may.  
From his strange diffidence the chief concludes  
Defeat and flight, and thus astonished, cries :  
' What means all this ? is't witchcraft that deludes,  
Or Nature's portents that appal the eyes ?

## XXXI

' But if there's one, the promptings of whose heart  
To pierce the depths of that wild forest burn,  
Let him essay the adventure and depart,  
And with at least more certain news return.'  
He ceased. The horrors of the haunted wood  
Attempted were, on the three following days,  
By the most famed, nor was there one that could  
Withstand its menace and terrific blaze.

## XXXII

Meanwhile, Tancredi had dejected gone  
' To bury his dear friend ; and tho' his air  
Despondent was, and his face pale and wan,  
And he ill-fitted casque or mail to bear,  
Yet when the need his noble nature found,  
He nor the perils nor fatigues refused ;  
And with that vigour seemed his frame to abound,  
Which in it had the quickening heart infused.



## XXXIII

Collected, silent, circumspect, the knight  
Advanced, undaunted, to the risks unknown,  
And bore unflinching the wood's fearful sight,  
The earthquake's rumbling, and the thunder's tone.  
Nor felt alarm ; and if within his heart  
One flutter rose, it did as soon go down.  
Forward he strode, when, lo ! with sudden start,  
Before him rose the fire-encircled town.

## XXXIV

Aghast at this Tancredi backward draws :  
'Of what use here are weapons ?' he exclaims ;  
'What ! fling myself into those monsters' jaws,  
Or in the throat of yon devouring flames ?  
Miser of life no knight should ever be,  
When aught demands it for the common good ;  
But still not lavish it unworthily,  
As in attempt so desperate he would.

## XXXV

'Still if I fly, what will the army say ?  
What other forest can they hope to fell ?  
Godfred will never leave without essay  
This pass. Perhaps, if I proceed, this hell  
Of lurid fire I see, and curling smoke,  
Is more in semblance than reality.  
But come the worst !' As thus the hero spoke,  
He leaped within—O matchless gallantry

## XXXVI

Nor 'neath his armour seemed to feel whate'er  
Of heat or fervour, as from fire intense ;  
Still if true flames, or phantoms false they were,  
Ill could decide so soon his doubtful sense ;  
For, scarcely touched, the phantasm disappeared,  
And a thick cloud the face of heaven o'erspread,  
That night and winter brought ; then shortly cleared  
The shades away, and gloomy winter fled.

## XXXVII

Astonished—yes ! but firm Tancredi stood :  
Then, seeing that quiet reigned on every side,  
He boldly entered the unhallowed wood,  
And all its secrets with attention eyed.  
No more those strange appearances he sees,  
Nor did he hindrance or prevention find,  
Save where the gloomy and entangled trees  
His steps retarded and his view confined.

## XXXVIII

At length a spacious area he espied,  
In form of amphitheatre ; all bare  
Of trees it was, save in the midst, where vied,  
With lofty pyramids, a cypress ; there  
He bent his course, and saw, as he perused,  
That the trunk different curious ciphers bore,  
Like those antique, mysterious Egypt used  
In place of writing in the days of yore.

## XXXIX

Amid those unknown signs some words appeared,  
Inscribed in Syrian, which he understood.  
'O thou, that in these aisles of death hast dared  
Thy impious foot, bold warrior, to intrude,  
If thou be not as pitiless as brave,  
Upon these secret haunts, ah, lightly tread !  
Our spirits, sleeping in the lightless grave,  
Respect ; the living war not with the dead.'

## XL

Thus ran the inscription. While he sought to find  
Of these few words the occult, mysterious sense,  
He heard in ceaseless blasts the rising wind  
Howl through the branches of the wood, and thence  
Draw forth a sound that in itself expressed  
The plaintive wail of human sobs and sighs,  
Instilling vague sensations in his breast  
Of pity, terror, sorrow, and surprise.

## XLI

With all his force, then, having drawn his sword,  
He struck the tree, when, wonderful ! the wound  
Of the pierced bark such streams of blood outpoured,  
That dyed in crimson was the earth around.  
Tho' startled greatly, he renewed the blow,  
To see the end now most determined grown,  
When there burst forth, as from the tomb, a low,  
An indistinct, and melancholy moan.

## XLII

‘To wrong me, Tancred, thou’st too much contrived,  
Let that suffice ;’ it then distinctly said :  
‘Since from the frame which with and thro’ me lived  
(Erst happy home !) thou hast my spirit sped :  
Why seek this wretched cypress to destroy,  
To which hard fate unites me ? Why behave  
With so much cruelty as thus annoy  
Thy foes, when sleeping in the silent grave ?

## XLIII

‘I was Clorinda ; nor the only sprite  
Am I that in this rugged timber dwell,  
Since every other Frank or Pagan knight,  
Who at the foot of Sion’s ramparts fell,  
Is here by new and strange enchantment bound  
In tomb or body—which I can’t aver :  
Sense animates the trees, and shouldst thou wound  
A single one, thou art a murderer.’

## XLIV

As sickly patient that in fevered dreams  
Flame-girt Chimæra or grim Dragon sees ;  
And, though he doubts the fact, and partly deems  
Them idle phantoms, not realities,  
Yet tries to flee, the horrid picture leaves  
Upon his heart such terror and dismay :  
Thus tho’ the timid lover scarce believes  
The false deceits, he trembled and gave way.

## XLV

O'ercome by such emotion was his heart,  
That turned to stone appeared the cavalier,  
Who in the sudden and convulsive start  
Let fall his sword—his least sensation fear ;  
Nor could contain himself. Before him stood  
His murdered idol, moaning and in tears ;  
He can't endure the sight of her dear blood,  
Nor the faint plaintive wails that reach his ears.

## XLVI

Thus the bold heart no dread of death could move,  
No form of danger, no horrific fears ;  
Alone enfeebled by all-powerful love,  
A phantom false deludes and idle tears.  
A blast of wind meanwhile his sabre bore  
Beyond the wood, so that o'ercome he left ;  
But on the roadway found, and grasped once more,  
The sword amazement from his hand had reft.

## XLVII

Still he returned not, nor attempted more  
The hidden secrets of the wood to scan,  
But Godfred sought, and, trying to restore  
Somewhat his scattered senses, thus began :  
'Of things not credited or credible  
Herald am I, and must confirm their view,  
Since all the accounts of the dread spectacle  
And of the fearful sounds are strictly true.

## XLVIII

‘ Before mine eyes a wondrous fire appeared,  
Which, self-sustained and quickly kindling, rose,  
And thence dilating, lofty ramparts reared,  
Where monsters stood my passage to oppose ;  
Yet these I passed, nor hindrance had, nor fight.  
Uninjured I, tho’ flames around me burned ;  
When of a sudden winter came and night,  
But soon broad day and summer skies returned.

## XLIX

‘ Still more—within each tree there is transferred  
A human soul, man’s very counterpart ;  
I know it from experience, having heard  
A voice whose moans still echo in my heart ;  
The wounded trees distilled red drops of gore,  
As formed of tender flesh. I must avow  
My own defeat. No, no ; I dare no more  
Strip off the bark or pluck another bough.’

## L

As thus he spake, the captain ’gan to wave  
In a great tempest of distracting thought,  
Thinking should he the enchanted forest brave  
(For such he fancied it), or if he ought  
Material seek in some more distant place,  
But not so difficult. As thus he weighed  
Both plans, the hermit sought his doubts to chase,  
Recalled him from his reverie, and said :



'The bold design abandon ; other hands  
 Must fell the wood. Lo ! urged by favouring gales,  
 The fatal bark has reached the desert sands,  
 And now in harbour furls her golden sails ;  
 Now, burst his bondage in Armida's bower,  
 The expected warrior leaves his lone retreat ;  
 Nor is far distant the predestined hour  
 Of Sion's capture, and our foe's defeat.'

## LII

While speaking thus, with zeal his features burned,  
 And more than mortal did his words resound.  
 And pious Godfred to new projects turned  
 His active thoughts, that little respite found ;  
 But having entered in fierce Cancer's sign,  
 The sun brought heat intense, unusual,  
 To his soldiers adverse, and to his own design,  
 As rendering labour insupportable.

*Revised*

## LIII

Spent are the heavens' benignant, friendly lamps,  
 And baleful meteors lord it in the sky,  
 Whence rains a blighting influence, that stamps  
 On air the seal of its malignant die ;  
 The noxious heat increases, and aye breeds  
 On every side mortality more keen ;  
 To deadly day more deadly night succeeds,  
 And days still worse are in succession seen.

## LIV

The sun ne'er rises, that, o'ershadowed now  
With blood-red mists which in and round it play,  
It shows not clearly, in its angry brow,  
The presage sad of an unhappy day ;  
Nor sets, that, with red blotches overcast,  
At its return it threatens not equal doom,  
Embittering thus their sufferings of the past,  
With certain dread of sufferings yet to come.

## LV

And when it pours its radiance from on high,  
Around, as far as mortal eye can stray,  
The leaves are seen to fade, the flowers to die,  
The parched-up grass to wither and decay ;  
Water to 'minish, the cracked earth to gape,  
Nor is there aught that 'scapes heaven's burning ire ;  
The barren clouds in air assume the shape  
And awful semblance of great globes of fire.

## LVI

A lurid furnace seems the leaden sky,  
Nor to refresh the sight doth aught appear ;  
Still in their grots the slumbering zephyrs lie,  
Hushed altogether is each breath of air ;  
Alone, as if from blazing torch, there blows  
Sirocco's blast from Mauritanian sands,  
Whose stifling breath more dense each moment grows,  
And strikes and suffocates the Christian bands.



## LVII

No longer grateful fall the shades of night,  
But with the sun's full glare imprinted seem ;  
Inwrought her mantle is with comets bright,  
With many a meteor flash, and fiery beam ;  
Nor to thy thirst, sad earth ! her dewy showers  
Concedes the miser moon. Thro' all the plain,  
The withered herbage, the exhausted flowers  
Long for their vital moisture, but in vain.

## LVIII

From restless nights sweet slumber exiled flies,  
Nor can faint mortals call it back ; repose  
Comes not, though fondly courted, to their eyes ;  
But thirst is still the greatest of their woes :  
Since with inhuman craft Judæa's king  
Did with the fountains deadly poison mix,  
And thus more black and turbid made each spring  
Than the infernal Acheron or Styx.

## LIX

And little Siloë, whose crystal tide  
Erst to the Franks its grateful treasures spread,  
Now but a scant restorative supplied ;  
Its tepid waters scarce conceal its bed ;  
Nor had appeared superfluous to their want,  
The Po in May, when it profoundest grows,  
Nor Ganges, nor the Nile, when, not content  
With its seven homes, it Egypt overflows.

## LX

If any e'er thro' shady banks had seen  
Pure molten silver stagnate in a lake,  
Or living water dash down Alps between,  
Or its calm course thro' flowery meadows take ;  
These in fond fancy they once more behold,  
They furnish fresh material for their pain ;  
Their image, so refreshing and so cold,  
Parches their lips and parboils in their brain.

## LXI

The limbs of manliest, stoutest cavaliers,  
That proof 'gainst journey o'er the roughest road,  
'Gainst weight of armour, proof 'gainst levelled spear:  
Of cruel foemen thirsting for their blood,  
Relaxed and melted by the burning heat,  
Now to themselves a useless burden lay,  
While in their veins lurk secret fires, that eat  
By slow degrees their very life away.

## LXII

The war-horse languishes, so fierce before,  
And loathes the grass, his former dearest food ;  
His faint limbs totter, the proud crest he bore  
Droops to the ground dejected and subdued ;  
No longer mindful of his victories,  
Nor with the love of glory more elate,  
His victor trappings and embroideries  
He now despises as ignoble weight.

## LXIII

The faithful dog, too, languishes ; all care  
Of home and lord forgotten as he lies  
Panting, outstretched, and with fresh draughts of air  
To mitigate his inward fever tries ;  
For if boon Nature respiration gave,  
To temper heat's excessive vehemence,  
Now it can none or small refreshment have,  
Since this they breathe so heavy is and dense.

## LXIV

Thus pined the earth ; in such condition lay  
Its wretched sons, consumed by burning thirst ;  
And the good, faithful host, despairing they  
Of victory now, anticipate the worst.  
On every side lamenting voices pour  
Their loud complaints with simultaneous breath :  
' What hopes for Godfred ? Why delays he more,  
Till all the camp is swallowed up by death ?

## LXV

' Ah ! with what forces doth he hope to gain  
The strong defences of our enemies ?  
Whence arms expect ? Doth he alone disdain  
To see Heaven's wrath revealed in signs like these ?  
A thousand prodigies, a thousand signs,  
How adverse is the Almighty mind assure ;  
On us the sun with such fierce fervour shines,  
Less needs relief the Indian or the Moor.

## LXVI

To him, insensible ! imports it not  
That we advance unto a death of pain ;  
Vile, useless beings, slighted and forgot,  
That he forsooth his royal power maintain !  
What ! is it then such happiness to reign,  
That he with so much eagerness should try  
The pomp and ease of kingship to retain,  
While thus around his subject-people die ?

## LXVII

‘ Behold the piteous care and mind humane  
Of him who bears the name of Pious—yet,  
An empty, dangerous honour to retain,  
Doth thus the safety of his troops forget ;  
And, seeing for us the founts and river dry,  
For its cool crystal to the Jordan sends,  
And at gay feasts, in joyous company,  
The wines of Crete with its fresh water blends.’

## LXVIII

Thus the Franks murmured. But the Grecian chief,  
Already tired their standard to pursue,  
Exclaimed : ‘ Why here expire without relief ?  
Why witness thus my people perish too ?  
If, in his madness, Godfred be so blind,  
Let him and his the consequences rue ;  
‘ What’s that to us ? ’ Nor would he stay behind  
Ev’n to take leave, but in the night withdrew.

## LXIX

Contagious was the precedent, and far  
As daylight showed, the rank infection spread.  
Those whom Clotharius had, and Ademar,  
And the other chiefs, now bones and ashes, led,  
Now that the Power, which all dissolves, had freed  
Them from their sworn allegiance, talk of flight ;  
Nay some, the more adventurous, succeed  
In flying under cover of the night.

## LXX

These facts were heard and noted by the chief,  
Who by harsh measures could have all repressed :  
But these he abhorred ; and, with that firm belief  
Which can make mountains move and rivers rest,  
To God raised up devotionate appeal,  
That he would ope the fountain of his grace.  
He clasped his hands, and, rapt with fervent zeal,  
To Heaven addressed his words and beaming face :

## LXXI

‘ Father and Lord ! if, in the desert, thou  
Didst on thy people sweet refreshment rain,  
Or mortal hands didst with the power endow  
Hard rocks to rive, and living streams obtain  
From the cleft stone,—to us do not deny  
Like love ; and if unequal be our claim,  
Do our deficiency by grace supply,  
Nor let us vainly plead who bear thy name.’

## LXXII

No lagging course his pious prayers pursue,  
Since sprung from humble and so just desire,  
But prompt and light through heaven's crystallin flew,  
Like winged birds, unto their God. The Sire  
Eternal heard, and on His faithful host  
Cast down a tender and compassionate look ;  
And, grieving for their toils and numbers lost,  
In these benignant, friendly accents spoke :

## LXXIII

' Tho' my loved camp may have suffered till this hour  
Painful and perilous adversity,  
Though hell with all its secret arts and power,  
And though the world against it armed be,  
Now a new state of fortune shall begin,  
And turn its grief to joy. Let rain fall down,  
Return its own unconquered paladin,  
And Egypt's host arrive—his fame to crown.'

## LXXIV

He ceased, and bowed his head ;—then shook the sky ;  
The stars and wandering planets felt the spell ;  
Trembled the reverent air, the mountains high,  
The fields of ocean, and the abyss of hell ;  
Leftwards forked lightning flashed, and with it pealed  
Loud claps of thunder through the lowering skies.  
Each flash, each peal, the gladdened army hailed  
With joyful clamour and exulting cries.

## LXXV

Lo ! sudden clouds, and they not earthly born,  
Or upwards drawn by virtue of the sun,  
But from high heaven—which had asunder torn  
Its mighty gates—fall, rushing swiftly down.  
Lo ! sudden night the light of day enchains  
Within its shade, that all around is spread ;  
Succeeded by such fierce, impetuous rains,  
That Siloë now o'erleaps his narrow bed.

## LXXVI

As in midsummer's season, if the shower  
So pined, so longed for, from the heavens descend,  
In fond impatience of the welcome hour,  
By arid streams hoarse chattering ducks attend,  
Spreading their pinions to the grateful cool ;  
None from the clear, refreshing moisture blench,  
And, where the gathering freshet forms a pool,  
Plunge in its depths their burning thirst to quench ;

## LXXVII

So these salute with screams of wild delight  
The falling rain, that with compassionate hand  
God sent His faithful people to requite.  
Uncloaked, nay more, unhelmeted, all stand ;  
This drinks from glass, that with his helmet vies,  
These keep their hands immersed beneath the rill ;  
Some bathe their throbbing temples, some their eyes ;  
Vessels, for better use, the crafty fill.

## LXXVIII

And not alone the human race is glad,  
Its previous waste rejoicing to restore ;  
But the parched earth, that was so faint, so sad,  
And in its limbs such gaping fissures bore,  
Sucks in the moisture, and unites once more ;  
And spreads it thence throughout its inmost veins,  
Supplying largely each exhausted flower,  
Each herb and plant with heaven's nutritious rains :

## LXXIX

Resembling sickly girl whose fever was  
By vital draughts and cordial balms subdued,  
Whence, disencumbered of the fatal cause  
That made her limbs its appetising food,  
As fresh and as recruited she becomes  
As in the season of her greatest charms,  
And now, forgetting her past ills, resumes  
Her robes, her garlands, and all beauty's arms.

## LXXX

The rains now cease ; the sun returns at length,  
But with a genial and attempered ray,  
As it is wont, replete with virile strength,  
At the end of April or the birth of May.  
O gentle faith ! alone thy virtue can  
The air's death-bearing poison dissipate,  
Can change the seasons' order and their plan,  
Thwart the stars' influence, and discomfit Fate.





## CANTO XIV.

### I

Now issuing from her mother's womb, the night  
O'er heaven and earth her sable shadows threw ;  
Bearer she was of zephyrs passing light,  
And of big showers of pure and precious dew ;  
Shaking the humid border of her veil,  
She with its drops the grass and flowers impearled ;  
And flapping his glad wings the gentle gale,  
Fanned the soft slumbers of the sleeping world.

### II

And all the cares on day attendant, night  
Had in refreshing deep oblivion drowned ;  
But, watching from his throne of endless light,  
The world's great monarch sat, and, turning round,  
Fixed on the Christian army's chief supreme  
His sympathetic and propitious eye ;  
Then sent as harbinger a joyous dream,  
His high and sovran will to signify.

## III

There stands in the orient a crystallin door,  
Near those gold gates from which in full array  
The sun comes forth, and which is oped before  
Unbarred's the portal for the rising day ;  
From it proceed those dreams the Almighty sends  
To pure unsullied minds by special grace ;  
Thence one to pious Godfred now descends,  
And spreads its golden pinions in his face.

## IV

No vision e'er in wildest dreams disclosed  
Such fair, such pleasing picture to the eye,  
As this which to their inmost depths exposed  
The secrets of the stars and of the sky ;  
In which, as in a mirror, he can see  
In all their splendour their contents displayed ;  
He seemed transported to a galaxy,  
A white serene in golden flames arrayed.

## V

And while he did in that high place admire  
The expanse, the motion, harmony, and light,  
Lo ! girt with sunbeams, girt with radiant fire,  
That almost blinded him, approached a knight,  
Who spoke with voice to which would harsh appear  
The sweetest upon earth. ' Godfred,' he cries,  
' What ! hast no words or welcome for thy dear  
And faithful friend ? nor Hugo recognise ?'

## VI

Prince Godfred answered him : ' That new aspect,  
Which, like a sun, miraculously burns,  
Has so diverted my dazed intellect  
From its old ken, that slowly it returns.'  
Thrice, then, his arms around his neck he cast,  
Transported by affection and esteem,  
And thrice the spirit, vainly circled, passed  
Like unsubstantial air, or subtile dream.

## VII

He smiled and said : ' Not, as thou deem'st, do I  
An earthly robe of fleshy fabric wear ;  
An immaterial form thou dost descry,  
And blissful tenant of the heavenly sphere.  
This is God's temple, here his knights abide,  
And here thou, too, shalt come, O cavalier.'  
' When will that be ? ' These mortal bonds,' he cried,  
' Loose, if they hinder my remaining here.'

## VIII

' Soon shalt thou be accepted,' Hugo said,  
' To share the fame of the triumphant ; yet,  
Ere that occur, 'tis fated thou must shed,  
Down on yon plain below, much blood and sweat :  
Thou must the empire of the Holy Land  
Wrest from the Pagan first, and then ordain  
A Christian kingdom, where, with puissant hand,  
Thy younger brother may hereafter reign.

## IX

‘ But that more vivified be thy desires  
For love of heavenly things, more close behold  
These lucid mansions and these living fires,  
By mind eternal quickened and controlled ;  
The seraph notes of syren minstrels hear,  
Hear their celestial lyres’ immortal strains.’  
Then said, and pointed to earth’s distant sphere,  
‘ Look down and see what yonder globe contains.

## X

‘ How mean, how abject, are the causes there,  
That prompt man’s valour and his actions guide !  
And what scant compass, and what deserts bare,  
Confine his puny and ignoble pride !  
It as an isle the circling sea surrounds,  
And ill doth your vast ocean correspond  
With the high title of those wordy sounds ;  
’Tis but a wretched marsh, a stagnant pond.’

## XI

As thus the spirit spoke, the cavalier  
Looked down and smiled, as if in scorn to see,  
Dwarfed to a point, the land and sea, that here  
Preserve their individuality ;  
Astonished how to shadows and to smoke  
Perverse mortality affix their eyes,  
Seeking mute fame and servile power, nor look  
To God, who calls—who bids them to the skies.

## XII

Whence he : ' Since yet it pleaseth not thy God  
Me from this earthly prison to set free,  
I pray thee show the path that may be trod  
Most safely in this labyrinth by me.'

' That,' replied Hugo, ' is the real way  
Thou treadest now ; depart not from its track :  
Alone I counsel thee, without delay,  
Bertoldo's son from exile to call back.

## XIII

' Since if high Providence elected thee  
Commander of this emprise, he ordained,  
Of thy designs, that Prince Rinaldo be  
Supreme executor : to thee He deigned  
The foremost part, to him the second place ;  
Thou art the head, and he the camp's right hand ;  
Nor could another that bold knight replace,  
And 'twere not right thou in his post shouldst stand.

## XIV

' For he alone will be allowed to hew  
The wood, defended by such magic charms ;  
From him the camp's desponding residue,  
That seem unable to resume their arms,  
Nay, much more likely to retire, will all  
For new emprises have their zeal increased ;  
Thro' him they'll overcome the strengthened wall,  
Thro' him the powerful army of the East.'

## XV

He ceased, and Bouillon said : ‘ How dear to me  
Were the return of that illustrious youth ;  
Thou, who dost all my thoughts most secret see,  
Know’st if I love him and declare the truth.  
What offers should I make ? and in what lands  
Should I—ah, tell me !—trace his errant flight ?  
Will’st thou I send entreaties or commands ?  
And how were that legitimate and right ?’

## XVI

‘ The Eternal King,’ the spirit then replied,  
‘ Who with such favour honours thee, doth will  
That they o’er whom ’tis given thee to preside,  
Shall honour, reverence, and respect thee still ;  
But sue not thou ; perhaps request from thee,  
The sovran chief, derogatory were ;  
But yield when asked, and stoop to clemency  
At the first summons of thy comrades’ prayer.

## XVII

‘ Guelph, whose kind heart the Almighty will inspire,  
Will pray thee pardon the rash boy’s offence,  
Which he gave way to from excess of ire,  
That to his post of honour at the tents  
He may return ; and tho’ in love’s soft maze  
And wanton ease, the youth now doting lies,  
Doubt not he will, ere lapse of many days,  
Arrive in well-timed season for the emprise.

## XVIII

‘ Since your sage Peter, to whom Heaven imparts  
Of its dark secrets cognisance profound,  
Will know to guide the messengers to parts  
Where of him certain tidings will be found,  
And will be shown them both the means and power  
To lead him back the distant seas across ;  
And thus Heaven’s favour will at length restore  
Thy errant comrades to the sacred Cross.

## XIX

‘ Conclude I now will with intelligence  
That unto thee will lively pleasure bring :  
His blood shall mingle with thine own, from whence  
A great illustrious progeny shall spring.’  
This said, he vanished like a wreath of smoke  
Before the wind, or cloud before the sun :  
The startling news the prince’s slumbers broke,  
And did his heart with joy and stupor stun.

## XX

At this he opened his bewildered eyes,  
And seeing the day had some time risen, sprung  
From off his couch, and, making haste to rise,  
Upon his wearied limbs his armour flung.  
To him soon afterwards the leaders went,  
Since they were aye accustomed to repair  
And meet for council in the captain’s tent,  
Where all was planned that was performed elsewhere.

## XXI

Here generous Guelpho, as the novel plan  
Worked in his Heaven-inspired, magnanimous mind,  
First of all those that sat around, began,  
Saying to Godfred : ‘ Prince most just and kind,  
I come to ask for pardon, which, ’tis true,  
Is pardon for a crime of recent date ;  
Whence the demand, perhaps, for which I sue  
May seem ill-timed and too precipitate.

## XXII

‘ But when I think the pardon we require  
Is for Rinaldo, from the pious chief,  
And that myself, who ask the favour, sire,  
Am no mean intercessor, my belief  
Is that, with ease, I shall this grace obtain,  
A boon to all productive of great good.  
Let him return, and, to wipe out this stain,  
Shed for the common weal his precious blood.

## XXIII

‘ Who but himself, with strength and zeal replete,  
Dare fell the forest that has cowed the rest ?  
Who death encounter, and its dangers meet  
With more intrepid and determined breast ?  
You’ll see him barriers prostrate, ramparts shake,  
Mount the breach singly foremost of us all.  
Him to the camp restore, for Jesus’ sake ;  
Our cherished idol, our high hope recall.



## XXIV ✓

‘To me a nephew, to thyself restore  
An agent prompt to fend and to attack ;  
Ah, let him sleep in vile repose no more,  
But to himself his former fame give back ;  
Ah, let him follow thy victorious arm,  
And let the world the noble stripling see  
Achievements worthy of himself perform,  
In admiration, peerless chief, of thee.’

## XXV

Thus he entreated, and the others rent  
The air with shouts Rinaldo to restore.  
Whence Godfred said, as if his mind was bent  
On things not thought of or conceived before :  
‘How were it possible, where all unite  
As with one voice, my pardon to refuse ?  
Let rigour yield, and that be law and right  
Which the desire expressed by all doth choose.

## XXVI

‘Let him return, but from henceforward rein  
With tighter bridle his impetuous ire,  
And the great hopes conceived of him sustain  
By deeds that may respond to our desire.  
Him to recall, O Guelpho, be thy care ;  
Nor do I think he’ll loiter o’er the ground :  
Choose, then, an envoy, and direct him where  
Thou deem’st the froward stripling may be found.’

## XXVII

Ceasing, the Danish warrior rose and said :  
‘ To be the chosen envoy I demand ;  
Nor path so long, so doubtful do I dread,  
To place the honoured sabre in his hand.’  
His offer greatly pleased Prince Guelph, for he  
Had heart and hand no trials ever bent.  
He wills him one, and that the other be  
Ubaldo—cautious, crafty, provident :

## XXVIII

For he had sought and seen in youthful prime  
Variety of manners and of lands,  
In journeying from the most inclement clime  
Of this our world to Ethiop’s burning sands ;  
And, like one buying knowledge for himself,  
Had learned their language, usages, and rites ;  
In riper years was then received by Guelph,  
And dearest deemed of his companion knights.

## XXIX

On such a pair the honoured duty falls  
The knight to summon from his lone retreat ;  
And Guelph directed them to those far walls  
In which Boëmondo has his royal seat ;  
Since from report, and general credence too,  
They deemed the illustrious paladin was there :  
But Peter, who the wrong directions knew, ●  
Cut short their talk, and, with commanding air,

## XXX

‘ Sir knights, pursuing the report,’ he cried,  
‘ Of common lying rumour, ye pursue  
A rash, deceitful, and insidious guide,  
That will mislead you from the proper clue.  
Haste ye to Ascalon’s adjacent shores,  
Where a stream enters the deep ocean’s brine ;  
There ye will meet with a great friend of ours ;  
Him trust—his sentiments are one with mine.

## XXXI

‘ Much has he seen himself, much heard from me,  
Of your foreseen adventurous emprise ;  
Long since I made it known to him, and he,  
I know, is kind and courteous as he is wise.’  
Thus spake the sage ; nor Carlo questioned more,  
Nor did his brother envoy hesitate,  
But promptly both obeyed those words, whose lore  
Heaven was itself accustomed to dictate.

## XXXII

They then took leave ; and zeal so spurred them on,  
That off they started, and began to make,  
Quick as they could, their way to Ascalon,  
Upon whose coast the adjacent billows break ;  
Nor had they heard as yet the hollow roar  
Announce the presence of the sounding main,  
When they a river reached whose waters tore  
Madly along, and were so swollen by rain,

## XXXIII

That ev'n its bed could not contain the flood,  
Which with more fleetness than an arrow ran,  
While thus perplexed they were, before them stood  
A worthy venerable-looking man,  
With beech leaves crowned, and clad in simple suit,  
Woven of snowy flax. He shook a rod,  
And 'gainst the current with unmoistened foot  
Securely on the unyielding water trod.

## XXXIV

As near the pole in distant northern lands,  
When winter's frosts the flowing streams congeal,  
Upon the Rhine the village girls in bands  
Whisk o'er the surface with reliant heel ;  
Thus on the soft unstable soil did he  
Of those not hard or frozen waters tread,  
And soon arrived where the knights fixedly  
Their eyes on him had bent, to whom he said :

## XXXV

' A toilsome, hard inquiry ye pursue,  
And in great need of other guidance stand ;  
Since, friends, the knight ye seek is far from you  
In heathen and inhospitable lands.  
Much —oh, how much !—remains to gain this end :  
What seas to cross ! what vast extent of shores !  
For, know, your search is destined to extend  
Beyond the confines of this world of ours.

## XXXVI

‘ But enter, an ye please, my hidden cave,  
And I will you my secret dwelling show,  
Where matters ye shall hear of import grave,  
And what is requisite ye both should know.’  
He ceased, and bade the yielding lymph give place,  
Which straight retired and hung on either side,  
Like a curved mountain beetling o’er its base,  
And thus a pathway to the knights supplied.

## XXXVII

Taking them by the hand, he led each knight  
Down to the lowest depths beneath the stream,  
Where faintly glimmered an unsteady light,  
Like that in woods, ere full is Cynthia’s beam ;  
Pregnant with water, spacious caves they spied,  
Whence rise those teeming veins that thro’ the land  
Leap into fountains, into rivers glide,  
In marshes stagnate, or in lakes expand.

## XXXVIII

They saw the springs of Danube and the Po,  
Whence Ganges and Hydaspes take their course,  
Whence Tanais and swift Euphrates flow,  
Nor hid the Nile its dark mysterious source.  
Still deeper they another river found,  
That living sulphur and quicksilver rolled,  
Which by the sun were purified, and bound  
In solid piles of silver and of gold.

## XXXIX

The margin starred with many a precious stone,  
Along that teeming river they beheld ;  
Whence, as if lit with myriad flambeaux, shone  
The spot, and was the horrid gloom dispelled.  
There sparkled, with heaven's blue cerulean light,  
Celestial sapphire and the jacinth ; there  
Glowed the carbuncle, blazed the diamond bright,  
And emeralds smiled, the fairest of the fair.

## ■ ■ ■

Still on, bewildered, the two warriors went,  
With thoughts so rapt with what they had descried,  
That both were speechless from astonishment ;  
At length Ubaldo thus addressed their guide :  
' Tell us, O father, where we are, and where  
Thou leadest us ; say who and what thou art.  
Do I dream or fancy ? What these marvels are  
I know not ; stupor so confounds my heart.'

## XLI

' Ye,' he replied, ' are in the spacious womb  
Of mother Earth, that all things doth create ;  
Nor can ye more into her bowels' gloom,  
Without my aid and guidance, penetrate.  
I lead you to my palace home, a place  
Which soon ye'll see illumed with wondrous lights ;  
A Pagan I was born, but thro' God's grace  
Was made regenerate by baptismal rites.

## XLII ✓

‘ Yet think not I by aid of imps of hell  
Perform the miracles ye gaze upon ;  
Nay, God forbid I should use sign or spell  
To force Cocytus or dark Phlegethon :  
But to their inmost springs I scrutinise  
The latent virtues of each herb, each source ;  
I study Nature’s unknown mysteries,  
And watch the stars in their erratic course ;

## XLIII ✓

‘ For, know, not always far from heaven’s bright zone,  
Live I in gloomy subterranean cell,  
But oft, on Carmel and Mount Lebanon,  
In most aerial habitation dwell ;  
There Mars and Venus their true nature show  
To me, unveiled in every turn and phase ;  
I see the others roll, now swift, now slow, .  
If threatening or benignant be their rays.

## XLIV ✓

‘ And ’neath my feet mark clouds now dense, now rare,  
Now black, now painted by the heavenly bow ;  
Behold how dews and rains created are,  
And how the rushing winds transversely blow ;  
How lightnings kindle, and when hurled from high,  
Their path how tortuous ; and at length began,  
Beholding stars and other fires so nigh,  
Myself to view as something more than man.

## XLV

‘ Yes, so o’erweening grew my pride, that I  
Deemed my extensive knowledge was the true  
Unerring gage of what the Deity,  
The great Creator of the world, could do ;  
But when your Peter had bedewed my hair,  
Washed my polluted soul in Jordan’s stream,  
My thoughts exalted, and made me aware  
How dark, how blind was my presumptuous dream ;

## XLVI

‘ Then, then I knew, like owlet in the sun  
Is man’s poor mind before eternal Truth ;  
I smiled at all the follies I had done,  
And at the haught self-confidence of youth ;  
But still I follow my old customs, as  
The sage desires, and, tho’ unchanged in limb,  
Am now a different man to what I was,  
Since I look up to and depend on him :

## XLVII

‘ In him I rest, he teaches and commands,  
My sovran lord, my guide and master, who  
Actions at times deserving of his hands  
Scorns not through my poor agency to do.  
Now, ’tis my charge from his captivity  
Back to the camp the unconquered knight to lead,  
Since he ordained it ; and long time have I  
Looked for your coming, as by him decreed.’



## XLVIII

While thus conversing with the knights, he gained  
The spot that formed his hermit-like retreat.  
Shaped like a grot, it in itself contained  
Galleries and halls, capacious and complete ;  
All that the earth in her rich veins comprised,  
Did there its full magnificence impart ;  
And every ornament was so disguised,  
That it seemed work of Nature not of Art.

## XLIX

Pages in hundreds were not wanting there  
To serve the guests, and, dazzling to behold,  
On gorgeous tables of pure silver were  
Large vases ranged of crystal and of gold.  
But soon as sated were their appetites  
And quenched their thirst, the old magician cried :  
' High time it is, you bold adventurous knights,  
That your still greater wants be satisfied.'

## L

And thus continued : ' Ye all know in part  
The schemes and tricks Armida introduced ;  
How to the camp she came, and by what art  
So many knights to follow her seduced ;  
Ye know how, after that, she, faithless host,  
Fettered and then despatched her captive prey,  
Under strong escort, to far Gaza's coast,  
And how they were delivered on the way.

## LI

' Now I will tell you of what happened then,  
And, tho' ye know it not, the tale is true.  
Soon as her prey, by such devices ta'en,  
Retaken was, the wicked sorceress knew ;  
Both hands she bit—so mortified, so crost—  
And to herself, inflamed with malice, said :  
" Ah, it shall ne'er be true—he ne'er shall boast  
To have so many of my captives freed.

## LII

" If he freed others, let him keep and bear  
The pain reserved for others—others' thrall ;  
Nor yet shall this suffice ; I would, I swear,  
One general ruin could ingulph them all."  
Thus fuming, she, with unexampled spite,  
Plotted the unjust fraud which ye shall hear.  
She went to where Rinaldo had in fight  
Vanquished and partly slain her escort ; here

## LIII

' He having left his arms upon the field,  
A Turk's had substituted for his own,  
Perhaps because he wished to go concealed  
Beneath device less famous and less known.  
The enchantress seized his armour, and inclosed  
In it a headless mutilated bust,  
Which on the river's margent she exposed,  
Where she foreknew pass by the Christians must.

## LIV

‘ Nor was this knowledge difficult, since she,  
From scouts employed by her in thousands, learned  
News of the Frank encampment frequently,  
And who from thence departed and returned.  
Besides, she often with dark spirits spoke,  
And did with them for lengthened periods dwell.  
She placed the corse then in a certain nook,  
That for her base design seemed suited well.

## LV

‘ And a smart varlet in the adjoining wood  
Stationed to watch, in shepherd’s garb arrayed,  
And drilled him both what say and do he should  
In that feigned guise ; and was in all obeyed.  
He spoke with yours, and in them sowed that seed  
Of dark unjust suspicion, which, thence fed,  
Bore broils and civil discords, and indeed  
Had almost to intestine warfare led.

## LVI

‘ Since all believed, as she, designing, feigned,  
That Godfred ’twas who killed the gallant youth,  
Albeit suspicion, wrongly entertained,  
Fled when confronted with the light of truth.  
This was the first, most cunning stratagem  
Framed by Armida, which ye now have heard ;  
How then the fair enchantress followed him,  
I’ll tell you, with what afterwards occurred.

•

## LVII

‘ She for Rinaldo at the passage waits  
Like cautious huntress. He at the Orontes lights,  
Where in two parts the river separates,  
And, having formed an isle, again unites :  
A marble column on the bank he spies,  
Near which lay moored a shallop ; he proceeds,  
And, fixing on its workmanship his eyes,  
In golden characters engraven reads :

## LVIII

“ Whoe’er thou art whom choice or fortune guides  
In pilgrimage to this enchanting coast,  
No greater marvel than this islet hides  
Can the east or west throughout its confines boast ;  
Cross, if thou wilt its paradise behold.”  
He on the impulse yields, now curious grown ;  
But since the boat could not his esquires hold,  
He leaves them there, and passes o’er alone.

## LIX

‘ Arrived, with eager and enquiring glance  
He gazed around, yet nothing there perceived  
But grottoes, fountains, herbage, flowers, and plants,  
From which he fancied he had been deceived.  
But still the spot so lured him and so charmed,  
That he seemed spell-bound by the attractions there ;  
And, sitting down, his glowing brow disarmed,  
To bathe it in the soft refreshing air.

## LX

‘ Meanwhile he heard, and thither bent his eyes,  
The river gurgle in unusual strain,  
And saw a wave in the stream’s centre rise,  
Which, in itself, whirled round and round again ;  
Whence just peeped forth a lock of golden hair,  
Then lovely face of youthful damsel rose,  
Then neck and breasts, and of her form to where  
Shame round the rest her decent mantle throws.

## LXI

‘ Thus, slowly rising from the stage at night,  
A goddess, or some fairy nymph appears.  
This, tho’ no siren, but a magic sprite,  
Might pass for one of those, in bygone years,  
That dwelt within the smooth, insidious sea,  
Near the Etrurian shore : her face as fair,  
Nor less enchanting the sweet melody  
She sang, and charmed the listening skies and air

## LXII

“ Thrice happy youth ! while April and sweet May  
Your glowing brow with flowery garlands bind,  
Ah ! let not tinsel Fame’s fallacious ray,  
Or specious Virtue, lure your tender mind ;  
Who plucks the fruit each season’s change supplies,  
And follows pleasure, as the good most choice,  
Heeds Nature’s dictates, and alone is wise ;  
And will you steel yourself ’gainst Nature’s voice ?

## LXIII

“Why cast, insensate, the dear boon away,  
Of life’s gold prime, that is so brief on earth?  
Mere names, and empty idols of a day,  
Are what the world calls fortitude and worth.  
Fame, which you haughty mortals would persuade  
With witching voice, and which appears so fair,  
An echo is—a dream—nay, a dream’s shade,  
Dispersed, like smoke, by the first breath of air.

## LXIV

“Enjoy your lives ; with pleasing objects let  
Your tranquil spirits the frail senses fill ;  
Bygone annoyance in new joys forget ;  
Nor hasten woes, anticipating ill ;  
Heedless of lightning’s flash or thunder’s strife,  
Let at its will Heaven all its wrath display :  
This wisdom is, this is a happy life ;  
Thus Nature teaches, thus points out the way.”

## LXV

‘Thus sang that traitress ; lulling into sleep  
The youth, by spell of her voluptuous strain.  
Little by little gentle slumbers creep,  
And o’er his senses such strong mastery gain,  
That thunder now had not the sleeper woke  
From that calm image of Sleep’s sister—Death.  
Forth from her ambush, then, the false witch broke,  
And o’er him stood, with vengeance-quicken’d breath.

## LXVI

‘ But when she had fixed her gaze on him awhile,  
And saw how placidly the youth reposed,  
And in his eyes such sweet expression smile,  
Tho’ sealed by sleep, (what were they if unclosed ?)  
Perplexed at first, she paused, then sat down near,  
And felt—beholding one so fair, so young—  
All trace of her resentment disappear,  
As o’er his brow Narcissus-like she hung.

## LXVII

‘ And, gathering in her veil the delicate  
And living pearls that on his forehead rise,  
Essayed, by fanning him, to mitigate  
The glowing fervour of midsummer skies.  
Thus (who would credit it ?) the heat suppressed  
In his closed eyes dissolved the mass of snow  
That, hard as adamant, congealed her breast,  
And lover she became, in place of foe.

## LXVIII

‘ With privet, then, with lily and the rose,  
That flowered profusely on those pleasant plains,  
Did she with skill entwine, and thence compose  
Pliant, but strong and most unyielding, chains.  
These round his neck, and arms, and feet she laced,  
Thus bound, and thus secured her captive prize ;  
Whom, as he slept, upon her car she placed  
And thence transported thro’ the liquid skies ;

## LXIX

‘ Nor to Damascus’ realms returned, nor where  
Secure her wave-encircled castle lay ;  
Since, jealous of a pledge so very dear,  
And of her love ashamed, she fled away,  
And hid herself in the unbounded sea,  
Where ship from us or ne’er or rarely goes ;  
And there, long past our farthest confines, she,  
For her retreat, a little island chose.

## LXX

‘ An isle which, with the neighbouring islets, takes  
Its name from Fortune : there the enamoured maid  
At once her way to a high mountain makes,  
All uninhabited, and dark with shade.  
By magic she then cast a snowy band  
Around its sides and spurs, but left the peak  
Snowless, and on that verdant table-land  
A princely palace built beside a lake ;

## LXXI

‘ Where, in perpetual April, the fond pair  
Each others’ sweet society enjoy.  
Now from that distant and secluded lair,  
Tis yours to drag the infatuated boy,  
And the guards conquer of the jealous fair,  
Who both the palace and the mount defend ;  
Nor will be wanting one to guide you there,  
Nor arms, for the great enterprise, to lend.



## LXXII

‘ Scarce issued from the river, ye will find  
A damsel, young in face but old in years,  
Known by the hair around her forehead twined,  
And by the party-coloured robe she wears.  
She will conduct you thro’ the soundless main,  
Swifter than eagle’s wings the air divide,  
Or lightnings flash ; and, coming back again,  
In her ye’ll find a no less faithful guide.

## LXXIII

‘ At the hill’s foot where dwells the enchantress, ye  
Will hear outlandish crawling pythons hiss ;  
Curling their bristling backs, wild boars ye’ll see,  
And bears and lions ope their jaws’ abyss ;  
But shaking this, my own enchanter-wand,  
They’ll fear to approach its sound. Yet, judging right,  
A far, far greater trial lies beyond,  
Which ye’ll encounter on the mountain’s height.

## LXXIV

‘ There from a fountain such pure water steals,  
That to behold it causes thirst intense ;  
But deep in its cold crystal it conceals  
A poison of such secret virulence,  
That of its lucid waves the smallest drop  
The soul intoxicates, and man inspires  
To laugh so, that at last he cannot stop,  
But laughs, and laughs, till laughing he expires.

## LXXV

‘ Far from its homicidal waters turn  
Disdainfully your lips ; the banquet laid  
Upon the water’s mossy margent, spurn,  
Nor let the tongue of treacherous girls persuade,  
Whose siren voices, and soft eloquent eyes,  
Possess such tempting, such destructive baits ;  
But both their looks and blandishments despise,  
And enter boldly through the lofty gates.

## LXXVI

‘ Within, all’s masked by tortuous walls from view,  
That in themselves a complex labyrinth make ;  
For this, on parchment, I will give the clue,  
So that the road ye cannot well mistake :  
In centre of the maze a garden lies,  
That breathes forth love from every leaf, and here,  
On the green carpet of its paradise,  
Ye’ll find the damsel and the cavalier.

## LXXVII

‘ But as she, leaving her dear lover, strays  
To other parts, I will that ye surprise  
The wanton youth by showing yourselves, and raise  
The diamond shield I’ll give before his eyes ;  
That seeing himself in his true naked light,  
And the effeminate garb in which he’s drest,  
Shame and remorse at such reproachful sight  
May drive the unworthy passion from his breast.

## LXXVIII

‘ Superfluous ’twere that I should more dilate,  
Save that in perfect safety ye may go,  
And to the parts most secret penetrate  
Of the intricate edifice ; for know,  
Not all the power of sorcery can bar,  
Not ev’n delay your journey, nor can she,  
Since guided by such influence ye are,  
Be able your arrival to foresee.

## LXXIX

‘ Nor less securely from the enchanted halls  
Shall ye retire and take your homeward way ;  
But now the hour to gentle slumber calls,  
And ye must rise to-morrow with the day.’  
He ceased, and led the noble envoys where  
They could their senses in night’s lethe steep ;  
And having left the pleased but pensive pair,  
The gentle sage retired himself to sleep.



## CANTO XV.

### I

ALREADY to their toils the dawn's first lights  
Had called earth's habitants, when prompt the old  
And friendly sage came to the warrior knights,  
Bringing the chart, the shield, and wand of gold ;  
And said : ' Prepare for your great journey ere  
The breaking day mount higher in the skies ;  
Here are the spells I promised you, and here  
All that the witch's charms can exorcise.'

### II

Already they had risen, already they  
Their stalwart limbs in armour had arrayed,  
And, by paths never lighted by the day,  
The old man followed thro' the gloomy shade ;  
And the same footmarks 'gan again retread,  
That on their coming first imprinted were ;  
But on arriving at the river's bed,  
' Success be yours,' he cried ; ' I leave you here.'

## III

Them in its buoyant breast the stream receives,  
And bears up gently to the surface ; so  
Are wont to rise up from the bottom leaves  
That violent eddies have forced down below.  
Thus to the humid bank they now return,  
Where they the escort promised them behold ;  
The little bark is there, and in its stern  
The fatal damsel that its course controlled.

## IV

Her hair voluminous round her forehead lies,  
Most heavenly is her aspect, and as fair  
As angel's are her calm propitious eyes,  
Such radiant lustre burns and sparkles there ;  
Her robe you'd call now crimson and now blue,  
As at each moment with new colours lit,  
So that you see it wear a different hue  
As oft as you return to look at it.

## V

Thus the gay plumage, which at times we view  
Encircling amorous turtle's delicate neck,  
Ne'er for a moment keeps the self-same hue,  
But from the sun doth countless colours take ;  
Of burning rubies it now necklace seems,  
Now with the green of softer emerald vies,  
Now all confused in one bright iris beams,  
And in a hundred ways delights the eyes.

## VI

‘Enter this bark, O favoured pair!’ she cries,  
‘In which I safely cross the sounding main;  
’Gainst it no storms spring up, no tempests rise;  
The heaviest weights it can with ease sustain.  
My gracious lord, unsparing of his grace,  
Me sends as escort to conduct you o’er.’  
Thus spake the damsel, and began to place  
The graceful shallop nearer to the shore.

## VII

When safely had embarked the noble pair,  
She slacks the bit, and leaves the river’s sides;  
And having spread the canvas to the air,  
Sits at the rudder, and the vessel guides.  
So swoln the torrent was, its back would seem  
Able to carry ships however great;  
But this so light was, any other stream,  
However slightly increased, had borne its weight.

## VIII

Swifter, far swifter, than their natural way,  
The breezes drive the vessel towards the shore  
Around its prow the sea is blanched with spray,  
And in its wake the broken billows roar.  
Lo! they now reach a spacious estuary,  
Whose larger bed the river calms, since here,  
Merged in the vast abysses of the sea,  
It nought becomes, at least doth naught appear.

## IX

Scarce did the enchanted vessel touch the mouth  
Of the great troubled deep that roared and rolled,  
Than disappeared the clouds, and from the south  
Ceased the strong blasts that had a storm foretold ;  
Planed was each mountain wave by zephyrs mild,  
That only curled its fair cerulean breast ;  
And heaven, a sweet serene diffusing, smiled,  
Nor ever had a calmer look possessed.

## X

They passed by Ascalon, and westward steered  
The little vessel thro' the halcyon sea,  
And soon the famous town of Gaza neared,  
Which was the port of Gaza formerly ;  
Increasing then, on others' fall, it rose  
Into a city powerful, great, and grand,  
Whose teeming plains and swarming shores disclose  
Almost as many men as grains of sand.

## XI

The travellers, looking towards the land, descry  
Of fluttering tents illimitable store ;  
Distinguish cavalry and infantry  
Pass to and fro from city to the shore ;  
Camels and elephants great weights transport,  
Beneath whose tread the sandy paths subside ;  
And in the deep recesses of the port  
View the moored vessels at their anchors ride.

## III

Some spread the flowing canvas, some attest  
The strength and swiftness of the straining oar ;  
And as they cleave the water's yielding breast,  
Sparkles the foam in silver clouds before.  
Then spake the damsel : ' Tho' ye now behold  
Both land and sea filled with the impious race,  
Not all his forces has the king enrolled ;  
This does not all his mighty host embrace.

## XIII

' Alone from Egypt and its confines he  
Has mustered these ; those distant he attends,  
Since the vast sway of his authority  
Far to the east and glowing south extends ;  
So that I trust we shall have homewards sped  
Ere he has struck his tents, or left the coast,  
He, or whatever captain in his stead  
Appointed may be to command the host.'

## XIV

While speaking thus, like scornful eagle, who  
Passes 'mid other birds in fearless flight,  
And, soaring upwards, is soon lost to view  
In the full splendour of the sun's broad light ;  
So 'mid the different ships her shallop flew,  
Nor had the damsel the least care or dread  
That they would either hinder or pursue.  
Away, away, with unslack'd speed she sped,



## XV

And in a moment Raffia reached, the town  
That first in Syria's kingdom doth appear  
To those from Egypt coming ; then sailed down  
The lonely coast of barren Rinocere.  
Not distant far a mountain they espied  
That towers in lordly grandeur o'er the main,  
Whose base is washed by the unstable tide,  
Whose bowels Pompey's famous bones contain.

## XVI

Then Damietta they observe, and see  
How the broad Nile her heaven-born tribute pays,  
Thro' her seven famous channels, to the sea,  
And thro' a hundred other lesser ways ;  
Then pass that famous city which the Greek  
Founded for Greek inhabitants of yore ;  
Then on past Pharos, once an island bleak  
Cut off from land, but which now joins the shore.

## XVII

Far to the northward Rhodes she leaves, and Crete,  
And coasting towards barbaric Afric stands,  
Whose shores alone are tilled and wave with wheat ;  
Within are monsters and unfruitful sands.  
Then Marmorica and the coast she shaves,  
Where once Cyrene's five proud cities stood ;  
Here Tolomita, and, with its calm waves,  
There view the source of fabled Lethe's flood.

## XVIII

The greater Syrtes, the bold seaman's dread,  
Landward, she shuns, and keeps well out to sea ;  
And, doubling round Giudeca's beetling head,  
Passes the Magra's mouth ; then Tripoli  
They view upon the coast, but can't perceive  
The spot where Malta's neighbouring lowlands lie ;  
Then the other Syrtes and Alzerbe leave,  
The dwelling once of the Lotophagi.

## XIX

Her bay extending two high hills between,  
Upon the moon-shaped sea-board, Tunis stands—  
Tunis, the wealthy and the honoured queen  
Of cities, noted throughout Lybia's lands ;  
On the opposite side Sicilia sits, and rears  
His brow great Lilybæum ; and here shows  
The damsel the illustrious cavaliers  
The historic site where once proud Carthage rose.

## XX

Low lies proud Carthage ; scarcely does the shore  
A trace retain of her wide ruins now.  
Great cities die, realms sink to rise no more,  
Rank weeds and sand deface their pomp ; yet thou  
Wouldst seem to spurn mortality, vain man !  
Thou mass of grasping selfishness and pride !  
They reach Biserta then, and, farther on,  
Sardinia leave upon the other side.

## XXI

Then skirt those plains where nomad Arabs lead  
A pastoral life ; Bugia pass, Algiers,  
Vile nests of pirates ; when, still more ahead,  
Oran, with its white minarets, appears ;  
Then coast along wild Tingitana's shores,  
The nurse of lion and of elephant ;  
Now kingdom of Morocco and the Moors,  
Then Fez, then over to Granada slant,

## XXII

Reaching those straits thro' which Alcides' hand  
Poured in the ocean, as old fables feign ;  
It may be true 'twere once continuous land,  
That some convulsion rudely rent in twain ;  
The barrier burst, in rushed the sweeping main ;  
Here Abyla thrusting, forcing Calpé there,  
Thus Afric severing by a gulf from Spain :  
Such are the changes to which Nature's heir.

## XXIII

Four times in orient had appeared the sun  
Since the weird vessel left the land, nor e'er  
Had, since 'twere needless, into harbour run,  
And so much had performed of her career,  
When, having passed the entrance of the strait,  
Fearless she plunged into the unbounded sea :  
But if it here, where land-locked, is so great,  
When it surrounds the land, what must it be ?

## XXIV

Thro' the high billows, Cadiz now no more,  
Nor its two neighbouring cities, they descry :  
They quit entirely sight of land and shore ;  
Sky bounds the ocean, ocean bounds the sky.  
Then spake Ubald : ' O maiden, who hast led  
Us to this pathless infinite expanse,  
Say, has ship e'er been here, and if ahead,  
In the world we seek, exist inhabitants ?'

## XXV

And she : ' When Hercules, with powerful hand,  
The monsters slew of Afric and of Spain,  
And had passed over and subdued your land,  
Yet durst not tempt the perils of the main ;  
He fixed these Pillars, and within restrained,  
In sphere too small, the ambition of mankind.  
But great Ulysses his commands disdained :  
No limits could his thirst for knowledge bind.

## XXVI

' He boldly past those fabled columns sailed,  
And seawards plied his oars' audacious sweep ;  
But naught his knowledge of the sea availed ;  
Engulphed he was by the voracious deep,  
Where, with his body, still concealed, remains  
His hapless fate, untold by mortal lips.  
If others there were driven by hurricanes,  
They turned not back, or perished with their ships.

## XXVII

‘ So that unknown is this vast sea’s expanse ;  
A thousand isles and realms are here unknown ;  
Nor is the land without inhabitants,  
But teeming, rich, and fruitful as your own ;  
Not barren can that powerful influence be  
Which the sun sheds.’ Then, as away they whirled,  
Resumed Ubaldo : ‘ Ah, relate to me,  
The laws and worship of that hidden world.’

## XXVIII

‘ As various as their races,’ she begun,  
‘ Their customs, rites, and language are ; nay, more,  
Some worship beasts, and some the stars and sun ;  
Some the great common mother Earth adore ;  
Others there are that load their loathsome boards  
With food at which the sickening thoughts rebel ;  
Barbarous, in short, and atheist are the hordes,  
That on the western side of Calpe dwell.’

## XXIX

‘ Has, then, that God,’ enquired the curious youth,  
‘ Whose advent to immortal light gave birth,  
Willed to withhold all glimmer of the truth  
From such a mighty portion of the earth ?’  
‘ No,’ answered she ; ‘ nay, more, St. Peter’s faith  
Will there with every civil art expand ;  
Nor will this long and seeming endless path  
Divide you always from that distant land.’

## XXX

‘The day will come when to the sailor bold  
Alcides’ marks will be a myth ; each sea,  
Whose very name remains as yet untold,  
And unknown realms, will then illustrious be ;  
And the most chivalrous of all the ships  
Will circumnavigate the sea-girt sphere,  
Measure the earth’s dimensions, and eclipse  
The sun in her victorious career.

## XXXI

‘Foremost of all, a gallant Genoese  
Will tempt that unknown, that untrodden course ;  
No dubious clime, no inhospitable seas,  
No tempest, with resounding menace hoarse,  
No peril of most formidable kind,  
No dread, no danger, howsoever great,  
Will mew his noble and magnanimous mind  
Within the limits of that narrow strait.

## XXXII

‘Thou shalt, Columbus ! spread thy favoured sail  
Towards a new world, which so far distant lies,  
That Fame, almost to reach thy flight, will fail,  
Or with her thousand wings or thousand eyes :  
Let her chaunt Bacchus’ and Alcides’ praise ;  
Thy name alone suffices for thy glory ;  
Thy very memory, to all future days,  
Will furnish theme of deathless song and story.’

## XXXIII

Thus spake the maid, and thro' the watery way  
Steered towards the west, and then to southward bore,  
Seeing behind how rose the new-born day,  
And how the sun in glory set before ;  
But at the moment when her rays and dews  
Around her beautiful Aurora spread,  
They saw afar a hazy mountain lose  
Amid o'erhanging clouds its lofty head ;

## XXXIV

But when its form the mist no longer hides,  
They see it its own real shape bespeak,  
Resembling Egypt's pointed pyramids,  
Large at the base, and tapering towards the peak ;  
And such a smoking, fiery cone display,  
As that 'neath which Enceladus doth lie,  
Whose nature 'tis to vomit smoke by day,  
And thro' the night illume with flame the sky.

## XXXV

Then other islands they behold, less great,  
And other cliffs, less lofty and less steep ;  
This is the group of isles called Fortunate  
In olden times, and still that title keep ;  
Whose friendly skies were counted so benign,  
That there spontaneously the untilled earth  
Was deemed to bear, and there the unpruned vine  
To the most prized and luscious fruit gave birth.

## XXXVI

The olive there ne'er blossoms to deceive,  
There odorous honey trickles from the oak ;  
There, murmuring softly, rivulets receive  
Their sparkling crystal from the living rock ;  
There to the dew of freshening zephyr yields  
The summer's heat, which ne'er oppressive grows ;  
And placed are there the famed Elysian fields,  
Where the glad spirits of the blest repose.

## XXXVII

Making for these, the damsel said : ' Now ye  
Approach your journey's end, O cavaliers ;  
These are the isles of Fortune that you see,  
Whose great, but doubtful fame has reached your ears ;  
Most fertile, gay, and beautiful they are,  
But false reports exaggerate what's true.'  
While speaking this, their lovely escort near  
To the first island of the decade drew.

## XXXVIII

Then Charles : ' O lady, if the high emprise  
That leads us here forbid not the demand,  
Let us debark, and feast our longing eyes  
Upon the marvels of this unknown land ;  
The people see, their customs and their rites ;  
All that to sage just cause of envy were,  
If to the world recounting the strange sights,  
I could exclaim, I saw them, I was there !'



## XXXIX

She answered : ' The request is worthy thee,  
O noble cavalier ; but what can I,  
If Heaven's severe inviolable decree  
Refuses with thy wishes to comply ?  
Since the full period has not yet come round,  
That God has for the great discovery planned,  
Nor may ye carry from the vast profound  
Authentic news to your benighted land.

## XL

' To you 'tis given, by favour from the skies,  
Far to transgress the sailor's common track ;  
To arrive where bound the captive warrior lies,  
And to the glowing orient lead him back ;  
Let this suffice, for farther to aspire  
Were to grow haughty, and wage war with fate.'  
Ev'n as she spoke, the second isle seemed higher,  
And the first in proportion to abate.

## XLI

Then by the knights, she showing them, is seen  
How eastward all in lengthened order rise,  
And that the space of sea which breaks between  
Each isle, is almost of an equal size.  
In seven they huts and cultivation see,  
With other signs that of man's presence tell ;  
Three are a desert, where, secure and free,  
Wild beasts in forest and in mountain dwell.

## XLII

In one of these a lone spot they survey,  
Where the shore forms a crescent, and extends  
Two lengthened horns, between which a vast bay  
It holds concealed ; a rock the port defends,  
And, fronting landwards, with its back defies  
And stems the waves that from the westward sweep ;  
On either side two beetling headlands rise,  
Landmarks for sailors o'er the pathless deep.

## XLIII

Beneath, the ocean sleeps in peace profound,  
Above, dark woods a gloomy landscape made,  
Midway, a cavern lay with ivy crowned,  
With waters pleasant, and inviting shade ;  
Ne'er rope, nor anchor with tenacious fluke,  
Ships binds nor bridles where such calm prevails.  
The damsel entered that secluded nook,  
And in a moment furled the flowing sails.

## XLIV

Then said : ' Sir knights, that lofty pile which lies  
Upon the summit of yon mount, survey ;  
There, lost in sloth and sensualities,  
Christ's champion whiles his worthless life away.  
With the sun rising for your escort, ye  
By that ascent must seek the enchanted bower ;  
Nor such detention chide, since each would be,  
Except the matin, an ill-omened hour.

## XLV

‘ By daylight, which still gilds the mountain’s side,  
Far as its base ye can with safety reach.’  
At the dismissal of their noble guide,  
They leaped with joy upon the wished-for beach,  
And found the road, that led to it thus far,  
So easy, that no need they felt of rest ;  
And, at the foot arrived, saw Phœbus’ car  
Rolling still distant from the ocean’s breast.

## XLVI

By many a precipice and ruin they  
Perceive they must to the high summit pass ;  
And that with ice and snow is strewn the way,  
While all beyond is flowers and emerald grass.  
Near its white chin the hair all verdant grows,  
And wintry frost preserves unsullied faith  
With the fair lily and the delicate rose :  
Such power enchantment over nature hath.

## XLVII

In a wild spot, with matted shade o’errun,  
At the hill’s foot the warriors passed the night ;  
But with the earliest blushes of the sun,  
Eternal fountain of God’s golden light,  
‘ Up ! up ! ’ they both exclaimed, and recommenced  
Their journey with a prompt determined will,  
When a fierce dragon crossed their path, and fenced  
(Horrid, diverse !) their passage to the hill.

•

## XLVIII

His scaly crest, and head of squalid gold,  
He lifts erect ; swoln is his neck with ire ;  
His red eyes glare as he with fold on fold  
Blocks up the path, and poison breathes, and fire ;  
Into himself now coils and now distends  
His knotty rings, and glides along to guard  
The wonted post that on his care depends ;  
Yet could he not the knights' advance retard.

## XLIX

Already Charles had drawn his trusty brand  
To assail the monster, when Ubaldo spake :  
' What wouldst attempt ? Deem'st thou that mortal hand,  
Or arms like thine, can pierce the guardian snake ?'  
Then shook the golden and immortal wand,  
Whose hissing sound the brute perceiving, he,  
Scared at the noise, fled swiftly o'er the sand,  
Concealed himself, and left the passage free.

## L

Still higher, to guard the pass, a lion stands,  
That roars defiance, scowls, and stamps, and paws ;  
Bristling his mane, he opens and expands  
The frightful cave of his voracious jaws ;  
Lashing his sides, he grows inflamed with ire ;  
And yet no sooner is the wand in sight,  
Than secret terror chills the native fire  
Of his proud heart ; he turns, and takes to flight.

## LI

Their swift advance the undaunted pair pursue,  
But find before them a dread phalanx rise  
Of beasts of prey, of every form and hue,  
Diverse in voice, in motion, and in size ;  
All that most monstrous, most ferocious roam  
'Twixt Atlas' confines and the Nile's far floods,  
Seem here assembled with the brutes whose home  
Is wild Ercynia and Hyrcania's woods.

## LII

Yet was that savage army powerless quite  
Or to resist or check the knights' advance ;  
Nay, (novel miracle !) 'twas put to flight  
By a slight whistle and a single glance.  
The now victorious couple straightway gain  
The mountain's crest without impediment,  
Save where the ice-bound paths their steps detain,  
And Alpine snows encumber the ascent.

## LIII

But when they had passed the line of endless snow,  
And overcome the steep and rugged ground,  
Beneath a sky of temperate summer, lo !  
On the hill-top a spacious plain they found.  
Here ever blows refreshing, balmy air,  
Nor ceases aye its changeless course to run ;  
Nor is its gentle breath, as haps elsewhere,  
Lulled or awakened by the circling sun.

## LIV

Nor doth the clime, as elsewhere, alternate  
Now ice, now fire, now weather foul, now fair ;  
Nor too great heats or colds predominate,  
But aye the heavens unclouded splendour wear,  
Nursing to fields the grass, to grass the flowers,  
Fragrance to flowers, perennial shade to trees :  
Upon the lake a palace sits, and towers  
In lordly loftiness o'er lands and seas.

## LV

The cavaliers from that steep rough ascent  
Felt somewhat tired, and lacked their wonted force ;  
Whence thro' the enamelled paths they slowly went,  
Now moving on, now halting in their course ;  
When, lo ! a fountain, that their burning drought  
Invited them to quench, before them lay ;  
And from one large and many a lesser spout  
The grass besprinkled with its diamond spray ;

## LVI

Converging, then, the different streams unite  
In a deep channel, 'twixt whose verdant sides,  
Screened by perennial foliage from the light,  
Gelid and brown, the brawling river glides ;  
But so transparent, that the bottom shows  
Whate'er of beautiful within it lies :  
Knee-deep the grass along its margent grows,  
Which a most fresh luxurious couch supplies.

## LVII

‘Behold the fount of laughter, and the brook  
 Whose limpid drops such mortal risks contain.  
 Here,’ they exclaimed, ‘we must with caution look ;  
 Here all desire and appetite restrain ;  
 Here close our ears against the enchanting strains  
 Which the fair sirens of false pleasures wake.’  
 Thus on they went to where the stream attains  
 Still greater magnitude, and forms a lake,

## LVIII

Upon whose edge a banquet was prepared,  
 Of the most rich and appetising food ;  
 And here two laughing wanton maids repaired,  
 To sport and frolic in the crystal flood ;  
 Now dashing water in each other’s face,  
 Now striving who first wins the goal ; below  
 At times they dive, and from their hidden race  
 At length their heads and dripping shoulders show.

## LIX

54-62

The nude and lovely swimmers somewhat swayed  
 The hardened bosoms of the warrior knights ;  
 So much so, that to gaze at them they stayed,  
 While they kept up their gambols and delights.  
 Meanwhile, one, rising up, her snowy breast,  
 With all that most allures the eye, revealed,  
 From the waist upwards, to the heavens, undressed ;  
 Her other limbs the lake’s blue veil concealed.

## LX

As from the waves peep forth the star of morn,  
The dew distilling of its watery home ;  
Or as the Queen of Love, when newly born,  
Rose from the azure sea's prolific foam ;  
So she appeared—ev'n so her golden hair  
Distilled the crystalline transparent lymph.  
Then looking round, she feigned to see the pair,  
And shrank into herself—the modest nymph !

## LXI

And the auburn locks that, in a single braid,  
Enwreathed her forehead, instantly unrolled,  
Whose long thick masses, falling down, arrayed  
The tender ivory in a veil of gold.  
The sight thus reft them, how surpassing fair !  
Nor less the change their admiration claimed,  
As, hidden by the water and her hair,  
She towards them turned, half smiling, half ashamed.

## LXII

The siren smiled, and thro' her dimples blushed,  
And from her blushes lovelier was her smile,  
And from her smiles the scarlet tints that flushed  
Her delicate face were fairer, lovelier still ;  
Then spoke with voice so tender and so sweet,  
That all the world had yielded to her speech :  
' O fortunate pilgrims ! whom this calm retreat  
Indulgent fortune has vouchsafed to reach.



## LXIII

‘ This is the haven of the world ; here rest  
From all its cares, and taste that bliss untold  
Which happy mortals formerly possessed,  
Uncurbed, unfettered, in the Age of Gold.  
Here ye in safety may your arms depose,  
Till now required, and, in this halcyon grove,  
Them consecrate henceforward to repose ;  
Since here ye’ll be but paladins of Love.

## LXIV

‘ The bed henceforth will be your field of fight,  
And the enamell’d greensward’s yielding breast.  
Now we will lead you to the royal sight  
Of her who maketh all her servants blest ;  
She will receive you in the lists of those  
Destined to share her joys : but in this lake  
Pray first the dust that covers you depose,  
And from yon table some refreshment take.’

## LXV

Thus spake the one, the other in accord,  
With becks and smiles, accompanied her ; so  
Musicians on the tuneful harpischord  
The dance accompany, now swift, now slow.  
But the two knights had souls of iron ; each  
Was deaf to their false wiles and treacherous art ;  
Their winning looks and captivating speech  
Touched the frail flesh, but left untouched the heart.

## LXVI

Ev'n if some seeds of their bewitching charms  
Entered within, where germinates desire,  
Soon reason came to root out with her arms  
The nascent wish, and quench the rising fire.  
One pair, thus baffled, stays ; one will not take  
Leave of the wheedling sirens, but departs :  
This to the palace goes, that in the lake  
Plunges—repulse so mortified their hearts.

## CANTO XVI.

### I

ROUND is the rich and ornate edifice,  
And in its central, innermost recess,  
A far more fair and wondrous garden lies  
Than dreams can picture or the tongue express ;  
Round it weird workmen had contrived to raise  
A straggling range of galleries, amid  
The complex turns of whose fallacious maze  
It rests, almost impenetrably hid.

### II

Thro' the main entrance (the vast pile had more  
Than hundred others) passed the warriors bold.  
Of chiselled silver, each elaborate door  
Creaked on bright hinges of refulgent gold.  
They paused to scan the workmanship, and each  
Found that the rich material it outvies ;  
No sign of life here fails, save that of speech,  
Nor had that failed, could they believe their eyes.

## III

Here they amid Mæonian maidens viewed  
How Hercules the passing hour beguiles ;  
And if he ruled the stars, and hell subdued,  
He twirls the spindle now : Love looks and smiles.  
Here, with effeminate hand, Iolé bears,  
In mocking mood, his homicidal arms,  
And on her back his lion-mantle wears—  
Too rough a burden for such dainty charms.

## IV

A sea lies opposite, whose azure plain  
Sparkles with foam from the white billow's splash,  
And in the midst a double row is seen  
Of ships and arms : the arms with lightning flash,  
With gold the waters glow ; and 'twould appear  
That ev'n Leucaté caught the battle's blaze :  
Augustus there his Romans leads ; and here  
His eastern army Antony arrays.

## V

You'd say, unmoored, the nimble Cyclades  
Plunged through the waves ; that rock encountered rock,  
The force was such with which both those and these,  
In towering vessels, met in mortal shock ;  
Now darts and fire-balls fly, and now you see  
The fatal waters with fresh carnage red ;  
And, ere decided is the victory,  
Lo ! panic struck, the barbarous queen has fled.

## VI

Antonio flies, and may that hope foreclose  
Of the world's empire to which he aspired :  
He flies not, no, nor fears—no fear he knows ;  
But follows her by fatal frenzy fired,  
Fuming like one o'er whom, as thus he flies,  
Remorse, combined with love and rage prevails,  
And who, distraught, alternately descries  
The doubtful combat and the flying sails.

## VII

Then, sheltered in the coverts of the Nile,  
He on her bosom seems for death to wait,  
And in the bliss of her angelic smile  
To find some solace for his bitter fate :  
Varied and sculptured in such wondrous guise  
Was the rich metal of the princely gate ;  
From these fair objects turning, then, their eyes,  
The knights the intricate building penetrate.

## VIII

As the Mæander mounts and now descends  
Its sinuous banks in mazy doubtful course,  
Now up to its springs, now down to the ocean bends,  
And meets itself returning to its source :  
Such, and more puzzling, were those tortuous ways ;  
But the book held the secret of the spot ;  
The wizard's gift such perfect clue conveys,  
That they unravelled and resolved the knot.

## IX

But when they had passed those labyrinthine bowers,  
In gay aspect the lovely garden opes :  
Still water, springing crystal, myriad flowers,  
All kinds of herbs and plants, rich sunny slopes,  
Grottoes and groves, dark vales' inviting shade,  
Were grouped together in one fairy scene ;  
And what more beautiful the picture made,  
Art, that did all, remained herself unseen.

## X

So blent was waste with ornament, you'd deem  
All strictly natural : the art of Nature  
Was such, that she, in frolic mood, would seem  
For sport to imitate her imitator.  
The very air was formed by magic powers  
That caused perennial spring : undying fruit  
For ever bloomed amid undying flowers,  
And one was ripe when the other 'gan to shoot.

## XI

On the same stem, and 'twixt the self-same leaves,  
One fig is ripe, while 'neath, another blows ;  
To the same bough the golden apple cleaves,  
As that on which its green successor grows ;  
In rank luxuriance the meandering vine  
Creep to the sunniest aspect you behold ;  
Here flowering buds their tortuous tendrils twine ;  
Here, big with nectar, rubies form and gold.

## XII

Beautiful birds, among the frondous boughs,  
Vie with each other in seductive spells ;  
O'er wood and water gentle Zephyr blows,  
And them to murmur as she strikes compels.  
When cease the birds, loudly the air replies ;  
When sing the birds, more soft its tones appear ;  
Or chance or art the voices harmonise,  
Or in alternate numbers charm the ear.

## XIII

One bird there was, that 'mong the others flew,  
Of variegated plume and purple beak,  
Whose untied tongue such sounds articulate drew,  
That like a man he almost seemed to speak ;  
And with such art continued to prolong  
His sweet discourse, he seemed a marvel rare.  
The others paused to listen to his song,  
And the wind hushed the whispers in the air.

## XIV

' Ah, see,' he sang, ' the blushing maiden rose  
Peep from her green, in modesty arrayed,  
And still half open, still half shut, disclose  
The greater loveliness, the less displayed.  
Lo ! she, grown bolder, bares her bosom— Lo !  
But scarce uncovered, her frail beauty fades,  
Nor seems the same—the same no longer, so  
Desired before by lovers and by maids.

## XV

' So passeth in the passing of a day  
Life's bloom and verdure, nor, tho' April's showers  
Return with promise of another May,  
Will it reblossom, or again bear flowers.  
Cull we, then, roses while life's morning be  
Pranked with that prime which time will soon remove;  
Cull we Love's rose, and let us love while we,  
Still loving, meet with fond return of love.'

## XVI

He ceased ; as if approving it, the choir  
Of tuneful birds take up the impassioned strain ;  
The doves kiss fondly, with renewed desire ;  
Nor is there creature can from love refrain :  
The vestal laurel, the hard-hearted oak,  
And all the various members of the grove,  
And earth and air, appear to assume the look,  
And the sighs breathe, of universal love.

## XVII

'Mid such attractive, such enchanting sights,  
'Mid song so dulcet, so divine as this,  
Unmoved and firm proceed the noble knights,  
Steeled 'gainst the spell of such surpassing bliss ;  
When, where an opening the thick branches leave,  
They cast their eyes, and see, or seem to see,  
Yes, they the lover and the loved perceive—  
He's on her lap, on flowers reclining she.



## XVIII

Her parted veil betrays her breast to view,  
Her tresses wanton in the summer air ;  
She languishes to charm ; a sheet of dew,  
Her fair face blanching, renders it more fair ;  
Like light in water, a lascivious smile  
Shimmers in her moist eyes ; with witching grace  
She o'er him bends. He in her lap the while  
Pillows his head, and lifts to hers his face,

## XIX

And, greedily depasturing his looks  
On her dear charms, consumed, exhausted lies.  
She, stooping down, now nectarous kisses sucks  
From his lush lips, now tastes them in his eyes ;  
But at that moment he so deeply sighed,  
You'd think his very soul had passed away  
To transmigrate in her. The knights aside  
The lovers' amorous dalliance survey.

## XX

A lucid crystal from the lover's waist  
(Outlandish instrument) dependent lies ;  
She rose, and in his hands unblushing placed  
That chosen agent of love's mysteries.  
He with inflamed, with laughing eyes the lass,  
In different objects one alone descries :  
She of the crystal makes her looking-glass,  
And he his mirror of her lustrous eyes.

## XXI

One boasts her empire, one his slavery—  
She in herself, he in her loveliness.  
'Ah, turn,' he whispers, 'darling, turn on me  
Those eyes which, blessed with, have such power to bless!  
For know, the fire that burns me, but reflects  
Thy charms, and tells how beautiful thou art ;  
Thy beauty, as portrayed in its effects,  
Less shows the crystal than reveals my heart.

## XXII

'Ah, would at least thou couldst behold how fair  
Is thine own face, as thus thou slightest me ;  
Since thy bright glance, dissatisfied elsewhere,  
Can in itself alone contented be.  
The clearest crystal but thy beauty mars ;  
How can small glass a Paradise comprise ?  
Heaven is thy worthy mirror, and the stars  
Alone reflect the lustre of thine eyes.'

## XXIII

Armida smiled at that, but ceases not  
To snatch fresh charms from her coquettish toils :  
She smooths her flowing hair, and, having got  
Into fair shape its wanton errors, coils  
It into ringlets, which with flowers she inweaves,  
As with enamel gold ; with alien roses  
The native lilies of her breast relieves,  
And then, self-satisfied, her veil composes.

## XXIV ✓

The peacock ne'er such beauty spreads in show  
In the full splendour of his Argus plumes ;  
Not Iris such, when her dew-spangled bow  
With gold and glowing purple she illumines.  
But rich, beyond all measure, was her zone,  
Relinquished never, even when undrest,  
And made of immaterial things : alone  
She to compose it the rare skill possessed.

## XXV

The coy refusal, the voluptuous leer,  
The feuds and truces, the heart-piercing eyes,  
The tender kiss, the sympathetic tear,  
The playful raillery, the broken sighs,  
She fused together, welded into one,  
Then tempered slowly o'er the furnace blast,  
And with them formed the talismanic zone,  
Whose mystic circle girt her lissome waist.

## XXVI

At length, her toilette o'er, she asks his leave,  
Embraces her dear lover, and departs,  
Since during day she took a short reprieve,  
Intent on business and her magic arts.  
But he remains ; she ne'er permission grants  
Him for a moment from that spot to stir ;  
He can but wander 'mid the beasts and plants,  
A hermit lover, but for being with her.

## XXVII

But when the twilight's friendly silence calls  
The impatient lovers to their stolen delight,  
Beneath one roof, inside the garden walls,  
They pass the blissful moments of the night ;  
Now, when Armida, for severer rites,  
Had left the garden and love's gentle charms,  
From their umbrageous hiding-place the knights  
Disclosed themselves, arrayed in pompous arms.

## XXVIII

Like war horse, that, triumphant at the close  
Of the campaign's fatigues and fame, repairs,  
As wanton sire in infamous repose,  
To roam at will 'mid pastures and the mares ;  
If but awakened by the trumpet's strain  
Or flashing steel, he neighs and gallops there ;  
He burns to tread the martial lists again,  
And in the charge once more his rider bear :

## XXIX

So felt Rinaldo, as the lightning rays  
Of armour burst upon his dazzled sight ;  
Instant his warrior spirit was ablaze,  
Excited, maddened by the welcome light,  
Though morbid ease and pleasures had entranced  
His facile mind. Meanwhile in full revealed,  
Ubaldo from the underwood advanced,  
And on him turned the adamantine shield.

## XXX

In the bright shield the youth himself beheld,  
Such as he was ; marked his effeminate air,  
What perfume saw and wantonness exhaled,  
His sybarite robes, his mantle, and his hair ;  
The very sabre pendent at his side  
Appeared a woman's gaudy ornament,  
Forming a useless article of pride,  
And not a manly warlike instrument.

## XXXI

As one with deep and leaden sleep oppressed,  
Comes, the dream past, unto himself again,  
So turned he from the mirror's faithful test,  
Nor longer could the sickening sight sustain ;  
With drooping eyes he gazed upon the ground,  
Timid, abashed ; a prey to burning shame,  
'Neath the wild waves he wishes he were drowned,  
Sunk in earth's centre, or consumed by flame.

## XXXII

Then spake Ubaldo : ' Far from this lonely shore,  
Europe and Asia bloody battle wage,  
And those who thirst for fame, and Christ adore,  
Now sheathed in arms in Palestine engage :  
Thee, only thee, Bertholdo's son, removed  
Outside the world, a little nook shuts in ;  
By the world's movements thou art alone unmoved,  
A Pagan trull's illustrious paladin !

## XXXIII

‘ What sleep, what fatal lethargy unites,  
Thy soul, thy valour to contaminate?  
Up, up ! Thee, Godfred, thee the camp invites ;  
Fortune and victory for thy coming wait ;  
Come, fated champion ! and, ’neath Salem’s wall,  
Complete the task begun, and let the horde  
Which thou hast shaken so already, fall  
Beneath the sweep of thy predestined sword.’

## XXXIV

He ceased. The noble youth remained a space,  
Voiceless, moveless, confused—but when the stings  
Of shame to indignation had given place,  
Armed indignation that from reason springs ;  
And to his blushes flashed another fire,  
That raged more fiercely, and more warmth bespoke ;  
He rent asunder all his vain attire,  
The wretched sign of his disgraceful yoke.

## XXXV

And springing up with haste precipitate,  
Through the wild mazes of the labyrinth fled ;  
Meanwhile the guardian of her royal gate  
Armida, horror-struck, saw lying dead :  
She first suspected, but too soon had proof,  
That ’twas her lover hurrying away ;  
She saw him turn his back on that sweet roof,  
(Ah, woeful spectacle !) then strove to say :

## XXXVI

‘Whither, O cruel, leavest thou me alone?’

But grief had closed the passage to the sound,  
So that returned the faint and dolorous tone,  
Within her heart more sadly to rebound ;  
Yes, power and knowledge greater than thine own,  
Poor wretch, have robbed thee of thy heart’s delight ;  
This she well knew, and vainly now had gone  
To try could magic yet arrest his flight.

## XXXVII

All the foul words Thessalian witches e’er  
Breathed from their lips obscene, with every spell  
That could arrest the planets in the air,  
Or summon spirits from the abyss of hell ;  
All, all she knew : and yet could not effect  
That hell would ev’n make answer to her speech.  
The sorceress then her incantations checked,  
To try would beauty prove a better witch.

## XXXVIII

She flies, nor recks of honour, or of state.  
Where are her triumphs now, and vaunted power ?  
She who Love’s empire, howsoever great,  
Turned and o’erturned by a sole glance before ;  
Whose pride was matched with such disdain, that she  
Loved to be loved, and yet her lovers hated ;  
Herself her idol, her delight to see  
In others the impression she created.

## XXXIX

Tho' slighted now, abandoned, and neglected,  
 She follows him who flies her, and who scorns ;  
 And her rare beauty, for itself rejected,  
 With tears, to make more beautiful, adorns.  
 Away she goes ; nor do her tender feet  
 Heed frost or Alpine roughness, and before  
 She sends loud cries, as heralds, to entreat ;  
 Nor reaches him till he had gained the shore.

## XL

Then madly cries : ' O thou that bear'st with thee  
 Part of myself, and leavest part behind,  
 Or take thou this, or that restore to me,  
 Or both destroy ! Ah, stay ! ah, stay ! unkind !  
 Let my last dying accents reach thine ear ;  
 Kisses, a fairer will henceforth supply ;  
 Why to remain, unfeeling, dost thou fear ?  
 Thou canst refuse, who hadst the heart to fly.'

## XLI

40-52

At this the cavalier stood still, while she  
 Came up all breathless and dissolved in tears ;  
 And tho' in greater grief she could not be,  
 Still not more sad than lovely she appears.  
 She looks—she looks him thro'—yet speaketh naught :  
 Or that she scorns, or thinks, or does not dare.  
 He durst not look ; and if a glance he caught,  
 'Twas with a furtive self-reproachful air.



## XLII

As gentle singer, who before he dares  
Free to loud burst of melody his tongue,  
With a sweet prelude of low notes prepares  
The listening world for his harmonious song :  
So she, who, tho' in bitter grief immersed,  
Had not forgotten her deceitful art,  
Breathed a short symphony of sighs at first,  
To predispose admission to his heart.

## XLIII

'Think not, ah cruel!' she began, 'that I  
To thee as lover should to lover pray.  
Such we were once ; but shouldst thou scorn this tie,  
Or that its memory on thy mind doth weigh,  
Hear me at least as foe ; a foeman will  
At times ev'n listen to a foe's desire :  
Thou well mayst grant what I demand, and still  
Preserve thy anger and thy hate entire.

## XLIV

'If thou dost hate me, and in that delight,  
Hate on ; I leave thee to that feeling free.  
Thou deem'st it just, 'tis just ; since I admit  
The Franks I hated—yes, I hated thee.  
I, Pagan born, a thousand means employed  
Thy realm to ruin, and with deep laid plot  
Thee followed, captured, and from arms decoyed,  
Far, far away, to a strange unknown spot.

## XLV

‘ And add to this, what more thy hate will move,  
And will the burden of my wrongs complete,  
I cheated and enticed thee into love.  
Most impious fraud, forsooth ! most base deceit,  
To yield the flower of maidenhood and pride,  
And make another master of these charms,  
And that which unto thousands was denied,  
To give unsought for to a stranger’s arms !

## XLVI

‘ Count this too ’mong the sins I have to bear,  
And let the faults of poor Armida move  
Thee to depart from hence ; no more to care  
For this sweet roof, mute witness of our love.  
Go, battle, toil, haste back to Palestine ;  
I’ll speed thee on : destroy our faith— Ah me !  
Why say I ours ? Alas ! no longer mine ;  
Since, cruel idol, I but worship thee.

## XLVII

‘ Let me but follow thee, and quit this soil ;  
Ev’n foes would reckon that a small request.  
The spoiler leaves not thus behind his spoil ;  
The conqueror goes, why then should captive rest ?  
Me let the camp among thy trophies see,  
And add this triumph to thy former fame,  
That thou hast mocked the woman that mocked thee,  
So that they point their fingers at my shame.

## XLVIII

‘ Shamed and despised, for whom, then, shall I save  
These flowing tresses thou hast rendered vile ?  
I’ll cut them off, and follow thee as slave,  
And to that grade my bearing reconcile.  
Thee will I follow through the hostile crowd,  
Where hottest battle doth its risks enhance ;  
With strength sufficient is my arm endowed  
To lead thy charger, or support thy lance.

## XLIX

‘ Yes, I will be or I will bear thy shield,  
Nor spare myself, so thou uninjured be ;  
Thro’ this bare bosom, on the bloody field,  
Shall pass the sword, before it reaches thee.  
Barbarian sure were not inhuman so  
As point ’gainst thee, thro’ this my breast, his arms ;  
And may the pleasure of revenge forego  
For these, whate’er they be, neglected charms.

## L

‘ Fool ! do I still presume, still vaunt the worth  
Of slighted beauty, that can nought obtain ?’  
More she had said, but scalding tears burst forth,  
Like torrent sweeping down an Alpine chain.  
To seize his hand, his cloak, she had begun,  
Kneeling in suppliant posture on the ground :  
But he drew back, resisted her, and won ;  
No entrance love, his tears no exit found.

## LI

Love entered not to fan the former flame  
That in his bosom reason had congealed,  
But in its stead, at least, compassion came—  
Love's chaste companion—whose mute voice appealed,  
And touched him, so that it was all he could  
Refrain from tears ; yet, by strong will, he reined  
His yearning bias to that tender mood,  
And by an effort, calm indifference feigned.

## LII

Then said : ' Armida, grieved enough I am,  
And fain would, an I could, remove from thee  
The burning spirit of thy ill-starred flame,  
Since I from anger and from hate am free,  
Nor wrongs remember, nor revenge pursue ;  
Nor can I thee as slave or foe address :  
Thou hast erred and passed beyond all bounds, 'tis true,  
Carrying thy love and hatred to excess.

## LIII

\* But then, such errors common are, and them  
Thy native laws, thy sex, thy youth excuse.  
I, too, have erred, nor can I thee condemn,  
Unless I indulgence to myself refuse :  
In weal, in woe, in life, aye, ev'n in death  
Thy memory will be honoured and most dear ;  
And, so far as my honour and my faith  
Allow of it, I'll be thy cavalier.

## LIV

‘ But let us now our shame and sin give o’er ;  
Such is, Armida, my last prayer to thee,  
And on this distant solitary shore  
For ever buried let their memory be ;  
Of all my deeds be this alone forgot,  
Nor in the world exist of it one trace ;  
And, ah, permit no ignominious blot  
Thy beauty, worth, and lineage to disgrace.

## LV

‘ Remain in peace ; I go, but thou must stay—  
My guide forbids thy flight with me ; remain,  
Or seek some other, better, happier way,  
And, as thou art wise, these mad resolves restrain.’  
No longer could the infuriate fair disguise  
Her growing wrath, as thus Rinaldo spoke ;  
Awhile she scanned him with spiteful eyes,  
Then into these malign reproaches broke :

## LVI

‘ Thee fair Sofia ne’er produced, not thus  
Dost thou the blood of Azzo’s stock attest :  
Thy parents were the icy Caucasus  
And wild sea-waves ; thy nurse some tigress’ breast.  
Why more dissemble to a man that shows  
Not ev’n a vestige of humanity ?  
Has he changed colour, or for my deep woes  
One tear-drop shed, or breathed a single sigh ?

## LVII

‘What things shall I pass over or repeat ?  
He says he’s mine, yet from my presence goes ;  
Compassionate, generous victor, to forget  
And ev’n forgive the offences of his foes !  
Hear how this chaste, this argumentative  
Zenocrates his theory of love refines !  
Ye Gods ! O Heaven ! what—let these sinners live,  
Yet hurl destruction ’gainst your sacred shrines.

## LVIII

‘But go, hard-hearted monster ! with that peace  
Thou leav’st to me ; unjust, relentless, go !  
But never shall my naked spirit cease  
To haunt thy presence, and torment thee—no !  
New Fury, I with serpents and with fire  
Will torture thee, as I have loved before ;  
And, shouldst thou ’scape the raging billows’ ire,  
And safely reach the battle-field once more,

## LIX

‘There, ’mid the dead and dying prostrate, all  
My pangs thou shalt repay, false cavalier ;  
And by her name Armida often call  
At thy last gasp—this, this I hope to hear.’  
But now the exhausted sufferer sank, nor could  
Complete the words that in her passion rose :  
She falls, half-lifeless, her dank pores exude  
An icy sweat, her heavy eyelids close.

## LX

*Rent*

Closed are thine eyes, Armida ; aught to cheer  
 Thy parting pangs invidious Heaven denies.  
 Ah, wretched, ope them, and behold the tear,  
 The bitter tear that blinds Rinaldo's eyes.  
 Couldst thou but hear the music of his sighs,  
 How it would soothe thee, and thy anguish quell ;  
 All that he can he gives, in piteous guise  
 Then takes (yet seest thou not !) a last farewell.

## LXI

What should he do ? Upon the barren sands  
 Desert her thus, half living and half dead ?  
 His stay compassion, courtesy demands ;  
 But hard necessity compels—He fled.  
 Away, away, the gentle westering gales  
 Thro' the fair tresses of his escort blew ;  
 O'er the deep ocean fly the golden sails ;  
 The coast he watches till it sinks from view.

## LXII

But when restored Armida gazed around,  
 Nought but the silent desert met her eye.  
 'And is he gone ?' she cried ; 'upon the ground  
 Could he forsake me thus, perhaps to die ?  
 Could not the traitor, in need's extreme hour,  
 Have stayed one moment, some assistance lent ?  
 And do I love him still, false, fickle Giaour !  
 And unrevenged sit here and still lament ?

## LXIII

‘ But wherefore weep ? have I not other arts  
And other means ? The wretch I will pursue.  
Not hell’s abyss, not heaven’s most secret parts,  
Shall screen the un pitying monster from his due.  
I seize him now, his heart to atoms tear,  
His limbs hang up, dire warning to convey :  
I would surpass his cruelty. But where,  
But where am I ? What is it, alas ! I say ?

## LXIV

‘ Thou shouldst, Armide, have wreaked thy cruelty  
Upon that cruel who deserved this fate,  
When him thou heldest in captivity ;  
But now thy new-born anger comes too late.  
Still, if my charms, my wit, can something do,  
My settled purpose shall not be in vain.  
Ah, slighted beauty ! it becomes thy due,  
Since thine the wrong, full vengeance to obtain.

## LXV

‘ This, then, my beauty the reward shall be  
Of him who cleaves his execrable head ;  
My gallant lovers, I demand that ye  
Perform a daring, but a glorious deed ;  
I, who of ample riches am the heir,  
In guerdon of revenge, will give my heart,  
And if unworthy such a price to bear,  
Beauty ! a vain and worthless gift thou art.



## LXVI

‘ Ill-omened gift, I thee repudiate ;  
I loathe my birth, and that I still survive ;  
To be the mockery of a queen, I hate ;  
Alone in hope of sweet revenge I live.’  
In broken words thus stormed the excited fair,  
Then turned her steps from the deserted place,  
Showing her frantic fury and despair  
In her wild eyes, loose locks, and burning face.

## LXVII

Her palace reached, with dreadful voice she hailed  
Three hundred Stygian imps. At once begun  
The heavens to cloud, and in a moment paled  
The aspect of the great eternal sun ;  
A furious whirlwind struck the mountain chains,  
Beneath her feet out-bellowed rampant hell,  
While echoed thro’ the extent of her domains,  
Howls, hisses, barks, in one unpitying yell.

## LXVIII

Shades blacker far than night, in which no ray  
Of light is mixed, the entire domain surround,  
Except where fitfully fierce lightnings play,  
And make the gloom by contrast more profound.  
At length the darkness ceases, the sun’s face  
Peeps forth, though not yet sunny is the air,  
Nor of her palace is perceived a trace,  
Nor mortal could affirm it once stood there.

## LXIX

As clouds at times in the pure welkin form  
The fleeting image of some mighty mass,  
Which the sun melteth, or dispels the storm ;  
Or like a sick man's dreams that swiftly pass ;  
So disappeared her palace, and remained  
Alone the Alps, and gloom before the eye ;  
Her car, which stood prepared, she quickly gained,  
And, as her wont, soared upwards to the sky.

## LXX

Begirt by storms and wind's sonorous roll,  
She treads the clouds and cleaves the air's expanse,  
Passes the regions of the other pole,  
And kingdoms of unknown inhabitants ;  
Passes Alcides' bounds, yet will not she  
Approach the land of Spaniard or of Moor,  
But keeps her course suspended o'er the sea,  
Until she reaches Syria's well-known shore.

## LXXI

Nor to Damascus goes ; she shuns the sight  
Of her own country, once so loved, so dear ;  
Her car directing to the barren site,  
Where 'mid the waves her castle towers appear.  
Arrived, a place of solitude she sought,  
And from her presence banished maid and page ;  
Then wandered, lost in many an anxious thought ;  
But shame soon yielded to o'ermastering rage.

## LXXII

‘ Yes, I will go, ere Egypt’s king,’ she cried,  
‘ Can to the rescue bring his eastern arms ;  
I’ll try again those arts which erst I tried,  
And to unwonted forms transform my charms :  
Slave of the noblest I’ll become again,  
And them with bane of rivalry infect ;  
So that I vengeance ev’n in part obtain,  
I care for neither honour nor respect.

## LXXIII

‘ Nor let my guardian uncle me accuse,  
But blame himself who made me play this part,  
Who first directed to unworthy views  
My feeble sex, but bold and manly heart ;  
’Twas he that made a vagrant dame of me,  
And did my shame unloose, my courage fire ;  
He is the cause of each indignity  
I’ve done from love, and yet will do from ire.’

## LXXIV

She thus resolves, and summons in all haste  
Her pages, serjeants, waiting-maids, and squires ;  
Seen is her princely fortune and fine taste  
In their rich trappings and superb attires.  
Away she starts, nor is there one that droops,  
Or day or night the least repose obtains,  
Until she reaches where the friendly troops  
Their ranks extend o’er Gaza’s sunny plains.



## CANTO XVII.

I

UPON the road that to Pelusium leads,  
On Judah's skirts, the town of Gaza stands,  
Close to the margin of the sea, where spreads  
A boundless desert of unfruitful sands ;  
Which, as the south wind does the rolling wave,  
The simoom scattereth ; when this obtains,  
Scarce can himself the passing pilgrim save,  
Or refuge find from the unstable plains.

II

Of Egypt's king the frontier town it is ;  
Long since he won it from the Turkish states,  
But since convenient for the high emprise,  
On which unchangeably he meditates,  
He, leaving Memphis, his imperial seat,  
His court translated to this distant coast,  
Ordering, from various provinces, to meet  
For muster an innumerable host.

## III

O muse ! inspire my memory to declare  
What force that mighty emperor did bring,  
What season 'twas, what state of things was there,  
What friends, what vassals followed Egypt's king,  
When, from the south and distant Orient, he  
Monarchs led on, and troops in countless swarms :  
Thou canst alone the list detail to me,  
Of chiefs, and troops, and half a world in arms.

## IV

When Egypt had her ancient faith forsworn,  
Rebelled, and did from Grecian rule retreat,  
A warrior rose, of Mahomet's lineage born,  
Became its master, and there fixed his seat ;  
Caliph was called, and by that ancient style  
Are his successors known ; and in this wise,  
Through countless generations, hath the Nile  
Beheld her Pharaohs and her Ptolemies.

## V

So 'stablished grew the realm as years rolled o'er,  
And had increased so, that it now engrossed  
Afric and Asia to the Syrian shore,  
From Barca's confines and Cyrene's coast ;  
Above Syene far its bounds expand,  
Where flows the Nile's interminable tide,  
Thence to the unpeopled wilderness of sand,  
And to the Euphrates on the other side.

## VI

To right and left its compass comprehends  
The odorous marsh and teeming sea, and on  
Long past the Erythræan it extends  
In the direction of the rising sun.  
Great is the empire in itself ; its worth  
Its present prince enhances, whose desert  
Is even greater than his royal birth ;  
In state-craft politic, in war expert.

## VII

Oft 'gainst the Persian, 'gainst the Turk fought he ;  
Attacked and routed them, and gained great fame.  
Now lost, now won ; and in adversity  
Proved greater still than when he overcame.  
But when old age permitted him to bear  
The weight of arms no more, he laid them down ;  
Yet could not from his warlike bent forbear,  
Nor from his lust of empire and renown.

## VIII

He still conducts campaigns by deputy ;  
And so robust in intellect appears,  
That the great fabric of the monarchy  
Seems no excessive burden for his years.  
Thro' each small province Afric is afraid,  
Her homage even Ind doth not withhold ;  
Some send him troops, a voluntary aid ;  
Others pay tribute to their liege in gold.

## IX

Such is the king that now collects his ranks ;  
Nay, urges those already gathered there  
Against the rising fortune of the Franks,  
Whose recent victories so mistrusted were.  
Last came Armida ; at the very hour  
Fixed for the muster she arrived at last.  
On a great plain, beyond the walls, the power  
Of Asia marshalled, before him march past.

## X

Proudly he sits upon his throne on high,  
To which a hundred steps of ivory led,  
And, underneath a silver canopy,  
His feet on gold-embroidered purple tread.  
Rich with barbaric splendour you behold  
His golden robes to glisten ; linen fair,  
Twisted around in many a tortuous fold,  
A diadem forms, new fashioned, for his hair.

## XI

His right hand holds the sceptre ; he appears  
Sedate and reverend, from his beard of snow ;  
And his bright eyes, undimmed, unchanged by years,  
With all youth's fire and resolution glow ;  
Nor failed his every attitude to prove  
The majesty of age and of command.  
Apelles thus, or Phidias, had formed Jove,  
But Jove when thundering with imperial hand.

## XII

On either side of him a satrap stands,  
Of whom the worthiest bears the naked steel,  
Stern minister of justice ; in his hands  
The other holds his office-badge, the seal.  
One, secretary, for the king transacts  
All civil business in affairs of state ;  
Prince is the other of his troops, and acts  
With powers most ample as chief magistrate.

## XIII

Below, his own Circassian lancers formed  
A bristling circle round his throne ; besides  
Lances, they were with steel cuirasses armed,  
And scimetars hung jangling at their sides.  
Thus sat the king ; thus from his lofty seat  
Reviewed the troops assembled in such swarms,  
Who, as they marched past, lowered to his feet,  
As to a god, their colours and their arms.

## XIV

Heading the column, the Egyptians show  
Their gallant ranks ; with them four chiefs defile,  
Two from the upper part, two from the low,  
Gift and creation of the heavenly Nile,  
Whose fertile slime, usurping the sea strand,  
Consolidated grew, and pregnant bore.  
Thus Egypt waxed : how much is now inland  
That was the coast, exposed to ships before.



## XV

In the first squadron comes the swarthy host  
That dwells on Alexandria's fertile plain,  
That dwells upon the westward fronting coast,  
Which there commences to be African.  
Their chief Araspes is, more famous far  
For subtile head-piece, than for strength of arm ;  
Master of all the Moorish arts of war,  
The secret ambuscade, the false alarm.

## XVI

Then follow those that, towards the Orient placed,  
Inhabit Asia's shores ; this troop was led  
By Aronteo, whom no virtues graced,  
But accident of birth illustrious made.  
Ne'er sweated had 'neath helm this carpet knight,  
Nor ever heard the morning bugle's blast,  
When from a life of idlesse to the fight  
Untimely ambition summoned him at last.

## XVII

That which is third doth not a squadron seem,  
But a vast army filling land and coast,  
For whom not Egypt's harvests you would deem  
Sufficient ; yet from one town comes this host,  
A town that equals provinces in size,  
And in itself a thousand guilds contains—  
I speak of Cairo, which this mob supplies :  
O'er them averse to arms, Campsoné reigns.

## XVIII

Under Gazel come marshalled those that reap  
Rich harvests in the adjacent fertile tract,  
And up to where falls down, with giant leap,  
The river at the second cataract.  
The Egyptian rabble have but swords and bows,  
Nor could sustain cuirass or helmet ; they  
So richly clothed are, that they cause their foes  
Less dread of danger than desire for prey.

## XIX

Under Alarcon, Barca's people passed,  
That almost naked and unarmed campaigned ;  
Who upon plunder in its deserts vast,  
From times remote, half-famished lives sustained.  
With hordes less barbarous, but still unfit  
For regular war, succeeds Zumara's king,  
Then Tripoli's lord ; both skilled in running fight,  
In raids irregular, and skirmishing.

## XX

Behind their ranks the yeomen are enrolled  
Of Stony and of Happy Araby,  
Who never feel excess of heat or cold,  
If with the voice of fame the facts agree.  
There incense breathes, and other odours ; there  
The immortal Phoenix doth new life assume,  
And finds, 'mid flowers for ever fresh and fair,  
At birth a cradle, and at death a tomb.

## XXI

Less rich and ornamented is their dress,  
But armed they're like Egyptians. Then advance  
Other Arabians, who no homes possess  
Of fixed abodes, not fixed inhabitants,  
Perpetual pilgrims, that in constant flight  
Drag migratory towns from place to place ;  
These women's voices have, and women's height,  
Long jetty locks, and copper-coloured face.

## XXII

Long Indian javelins, tipped with steel, they bear,  
And move so fleetly, that each bounding steed,  
You'd say, was borne by whirlwind thro' the air,  
If whirlwind e'er possessed such wondrous speed.  
By Syphax was the foremost squadron led,  
The second by Aldino ; in the rear  
Follows the third, Albiazar at its head—  
A murderous bandit, not a cavalier.

## XXIII

Then pass the legions from those isles, around  
Whose shores the water of Arabia curls,  
Within whose teeming depths are often found  
Rich fecund shells impregnated with precious pearls ;  
Their straggling ranks the numerous Negroes close,  
On the left coast of the Erythræan born :  
These Agricalte leads ; Osmida those,  
Who holds all faith and every law in scorn.

## XXIV

Then pass the Ethiops that Meroë sends,  
An island formed by Astabora here,  
There by the mighty Nile ; it comprehends  
Three realms and two religions in its sphere :  
These Assimiro and Canario led ;  
Both kings and followers of the Prophet, they  
Acknowledge Egypt's Caliph as their head :  
The third a Christian is, and stays away.

## XXV

Then come two other vassal kings, whose bands  
Are armed with bow and arrow for the war :  
Soldan of Ormus one, whose fertile lands  
By the great Persian Gulf surrounded are.  
From Boëcan one, which, when the currents flow,  
Becomes an island too, but whensoe'er  
The tide recedes, the water falls so low,  
That with dry foot the pilgrim passes there.

## XXVI

Thee, Altamoro, in her virtuous bed,  
Thy wife could not detain ; tho', in despair  
To stop thy fatal going, tears she shed,  
And beat her breast, and tore her golden hair :  
' Has, then, the ocean's frightful face more charms  
Than the fond pleading of my loving gaze?  
More pleasing burden, cruel, are thy arms,  
Than our dear child, when in thy lap he plays ?'

## XXVII

He is the King of Samarcand, his crown  
Is of his merits that of least esteem ;  
Such skill in arms he unites to such renown  
For courage frank, and gallantry extreme.  
His arm, I prophesy, the Franks will feel ;  
Nay, have good reason ev'n to fear it now.  
His troops cuirasses wear of polished steel,  
Swords at their sides, and mace at saddle-bow.

## XXVIII

Lo! from far India and the East repairs  
Fierce Prince Adrastus to the battle's din ;  
He on his breast, by way of corselet, wears,  
Speckled with green and black, a dragon's skin ;  
Upon a monstrous éléphant he rides,  
As 'twere a simple steed ; his forces he  
From this side of the rapid Ganges guides,  
Where the swoln Indus breaks upon the sea.

## XXIX

The troop succeeding in its ranks contained  
The flower of all the imperial army ; they  
To serve in peace and war-time were retained  
By fitting honours and most liberal pay.  
Armed both for safety and their foes' affright,  
They on strong well-broke steeds prance proudly by,  
And with their purple mantles, and the light  
Of gold and steel, illuminate the sky.

## XXX

'Mong them Alarco is, and Odemar,  
Idraort, and Rimedon, who hath  
Great reputation from bold feats in war,  
Scorner alike of mortals and of death.  
Rapoldo, the sea-king, and corsair famed ;  
Tigranes, and Ormond, the powerful hight,  
And Marlabusto the Arabian, named  
So from the Arabs he subdued in fight.

## XXXI

There Pirga, Arimon, Orindo were ;  
Brimarté, conqueror of towns ; Siphant,  
Tamer of horse ; and thou, beyond compare,  
First in the wrestler's art, Aridamant ;  
And Tisaphernes, thunderbolt of Mars,  
Whom none can vaunt to match as cavalier,  
Whether on horseback or on foot he wars,  
The broadsword whirls or hurls the massy spear.

## XXXII

Them an Armenian leads, who left the truth  
Of Jesus' word, and turned Mahometan,  
Ev'n in the prime and vigour of his youth ;  
His name Clementè erst, now Emiren.  
Still true he was to Egypt's king, and dear  
Beyond all other princes of the land ;  
Uniting worth of chief and cavalier,  
In heart, in judgment, and in strength of hand.

## XXXIII

No more remained, when, like a shooting star,  
Armida suddenly her train displayed.  
She sat sublime upon a gorgeous car,  
And as a quivered archer was arrayed.  
Her lovely face with recent anger gleamed,  
Which with its fire her natural sweetness armed ;  
Relentless, and in bitter mood, she seemed  
To threaten all, and still, while threatening, charmed.

## XXXIV

Her car with jacinths and carbuncles shone,  
And vied in splendour with the glorious Morn's ;  
A charioteer, the golden yoke upon,  
Drove, bound in pairs, four docile unicorns.  
A hundred girls and pages round her course,  
Whose tender shoulders polished quivers bear ;  
Each mounted is upon a milk-white horse,  
Well broke, and bitted, and as swift as air.

## XXXV

Then came her troops, by Aradino led,  
And raised by Idraot in Palestine.  
As when reborn the bird unique doth spread  
His wings to visit lands beneath the line,  
His variegated plumage, necklace rare,  
And golden coronet, the world astound ;  
While flocks of birds, his escort thro' the air,  
In wonder lost, on all sides hover round :

## XXXVI

So passed Armida, seeming, as she drove,  
In look, attire, and port, a marvel rare ;  
Nor was there one such stubborn soul of love,  
But straight became enamoured of the fair.  
If, when scarce seen, and in such sullen mood,  
She could so great and various hosts beguile,  
What were the spell, when she, all sunshine, wooed  
With her seductive eyes and witching smile ?

## XXXVII

When she had passed, the king of kings commands  
That they the gallant Emireno call ;  
Preferred to the other captains of his bands,  
He meant to make him captain over all ;  
Divining his intent, with look of pride,  
That told how due the honour, he attends :  
Straight the Circassian guard their ranks divide,  
And make a path, while he the throne ascends.

## XXXVIII

With head in reverence bowed, and bended knee,  
Upon his heart he laid his loyal hand,  
When thus the king : ' O Emiren, to thee  
I entrust this sceptre and the chief command ;  
Hurl on the Franks my vengeful wrath, and rive  
The galling chains of the beleaguered king ;  
Go, see, and conquer ; leave no soul alive,  
Or should one 'scape, him back a prisoner bring.'



## XXXIX

The knight then took the symbol of command,  
Soon as the tyrant ceased, and thus replied :  
' I take the sceptre from thy unconquered hand,  
And to the emprise proceed, thy star my guide ;  
And, as thy captain, hope, in right of thee,  
Asia's deep wrongs to vindicate. Thy face  
I ne'er, except as conqueror, will see ;  
Failure may bring me death, but not disgrace.

## XL

' And Heaven I pray, should its indignant arm  
Misfortune menace, which I don't believe,  
That on my head alone the fatal storm  
May spend its fury, but uninjured leave  
The gallant host, and that their chief be borne  
Back in triumphal, more than funeral pride.'  
He ceased, the clang of many a barbarous horn  
To the camp's hearty wild huzzas replied.

## XLI

Girt by his staff, amid their ringing cheers,  
The mighty monarch hastened to depart ;  
And, reached his tent, assembled his chief peers  
To a gay banquet—but he sat apart,  
Dispensing viands now, now words of grace,  
He honoured all. There fair Armida found  
For her designs a most convenient place,  
While 'mong them mirth and revelry flew round.

## XLII

Soon as the tables cleared, the artful fair  
Perceived all eyes were fixed on her alone,  
And was by many well-known signs aware  
How deep her poison on their minds was sown.  
She rose, and turning round in attitude  
That of respect and stateliness partook,  
Tried to appear as fully as she could  
Fierce and magnanimous in voice and look :

## XLIII

‘ I, too, have come,’ she said, ‘ O king supreme,  
Aid for our faith and country to afford ;  
Woman I am, but royal, nor can deem  
It wrong that I, a queen, unsheathe the sword :  
Who reigns should practise every royal art,  
And the same hand both arms and sceptre wield.  
Mine shall strike home, aye, to the very heart,  
And strow with foeman’s blood the battle-field.

## XLIV

‘ Nor think that this is the first day my zeal  
Has urged me forward in this noble cause,  
For I before have battled for thy weal,  
And in support of Mahmoud’s sacred laws ;  
Thou shouldst remember if I speak the truth,  
Who hast some knowledge of each gain, each loss ;  
Thou know’st what numbers of its bravest youth  
I captured prisoners from the purple Cross.

## XLV

‘ By me they were both taken and secured,  
And unto thee as splendid trophies sent ;  
And still in thy dark dungeons had endured  
From thee perpetual imprisonment,  
And thou hadst been a thousand times more sure  
To have crowned thy great dispute with victory,  
Did not Rinaldo fatal means procure  
To slay my escort, and to set them free.

## XLVI

‘ Who this Rinaldo is, is widely known,  
Ev’n here has reached some mention of his name ;  
He is that cruel, who on me has thrown  
Such deep affronts, uncanceled yet their shame ;  
Hence wrath to reason adds its rankling sting,  
And makes me burn his insults to avenge :  
But what they are, some day you will know, O king ;  
Enough at present, that I want revenge.

## XLVII

‘ And I will have it ; since not all in vain  
The winds are wont to carry every dart,  
Nor does at times Heaven’s equal hand disdain  
To guide just arms against offender’s heart ;  
But if there be who from that wretch will rive  
His odious head, and it present to me,  
That mode of vengeance will some pleasure give,  
Tho’ if I wrought it, ’twould more noble be.

## XLVIII

Some pleasure—yes ; from him I'll not withhold  
The greatest recompense within my power ;  
I, richly endowed by Nature and with gold,  
Will give him, if required, myself and dower ;  
Thus with an oath this pledge I solemnise,  
My promise thus inviolable make :  
Now, if there be those that esteem our prize  
Worthy the risk, let them stand forth and speak.'

## XLIX

As thus Armida spoke, his greedy eyes  
Love-struck Adrastus riveted on her :  
'Nay, Heaven forbid thou shouldst discharge,' he cries,  
'One shaft against that barbarous murderer ;  
A villain heart like his, O archer fair,  
Were quite unworthy of thy touch : instead,  
I will the arrows of thy anger bear,  
And thee present with his accursed head.

## L

'I'll tear his heart out, and his limbs divide,  
As food for ravenous vultures to devour.'  
Thus the Indian potentate, Adrastus, cried ;  
But Tisapherne his vaunts could not endure.  
'And who art thou,' said he, 'that show'st such brass,  
In thy king's presence and thy peers among ;  
Here's one, maybe, that would thy boasts surpass  
By valiant actions, and yet holds his tongue.'

## LI

The fiery Indian answered : ' I am one  
Whose deeds were never by his words surpassed,  
And hadst thou spoken elsewhere, as thou hast done  
Before me here, such words had been thy last.'  
They had continued ; but the king supreme,  
His hand extending, bade the rivals part ;  
Then to Armida said : ' Illustrious dame,  
Thou hast, indeed, a manly generous heart.

## LII

' And worthy art, that they to thee transfer  
The scorn and passions which their bosoms fill,  
That 'gainst this strong enfeebled plunderer  
Thou mayst hereafter launch them at thy will ;  
There they were best employed, their courage there  
In friendly rivalry were best displayed.'  
This said, he ceased ; again the jealous pair  
To avenge their idol's cause fresh offers made.

## LIII

Not only these, but all most famous there,  
Offer with ready tongue their blood to shed ;  
All volunteer, all bloody vengeance swear  
Against Rinaldo's execrable head.  
Such arms she moved, such anger roused meanwhile,  
'Gainst the bold warrior once esteemed so dear :  
But he, as soon as he had left the isle,  
Began his homeward prosperous course to steer.

## LIV

The shallop, favoured by the western gales  
Returning, did its former course pursue,  
And the fair breeze, that winged the bellying sails,  
To waft it back no less propitious blew.  
The youth now saw the Pole and either Bear,  
And now the stars that, as bright Pharos, keep  
Illumed the path of Night ; here streams, and there  
Hills, whose rough peaks rise beetling o'er the deep.

## LV

News of the camp now, now the usages  
Of various realms he asks ; and they had gone  
So far already through the briny seas,  
That the fourth morning from the Orient shone ;  
But when the sun's declining rays had fled,  
The enchanted vessel reached the Syrian shore.  
' Behold fair Palestine,' the lady said ;  
' Your journey's ended, and my task is o'er.'

## LVI

The three knights then upon the beach she placed,  
And, ere a word could uttered be, had gone ;  
Meanwhile dark night the lingering twilight chased,  
And blent the varied colours into one.  
They could not in those sandy deserts scan  
Or circling wall or sheltering abode ;  
No trace appeared of either horse or man,  
Or any sign to indicate the road.

## LVII

But when perplexed they had some moments been,  
Their shoulders to the sounding sea they turned,  
When going, lo ! before their eyes was seen  
Something that with unusual lustre burned,  
And lit with gold and silver rays the night,  
Making the shadows rarer ; whereupon  
Their footsteps they directed towards the light,  
And see already what it is that shone.

## LVIII

On a huge trunk arms newly made they spy,  
Suspended opposite the moon's clear rays,  
And, brighter far than planets in the sky,  
Gems in the gilded casque and breastplate blaze ;  
In the great shield they see, by Dian lit,  
Fair figures stretching in extended rows :  
Near, as if guardian, did an old man sit,  
Who, when he saw, to meet them straightway rose.

## LIX

Well, by two of the noble knights, the face  
Of their sage venerable friend is known,  
Who, when he had received their warm embrace,  
And had to them a courteous greeting shown,  
Turned to the youth, who mute and silently  
Returned his gaze, and said to him : ' For none,  
Save thee, O prince, at such an hour have I  
Thus waited here, impatient and alone.

## LX

*Rev'd*

' I, tho' thou know'st not, am thy friend, and how  
 I watch thy interests but enquire of these,  
 Who, led by me, o'ercame the spells, where thou  
 Thy life wast wasting in ignoble ease.  
 Now mark my words—unlike the siren's song,  
 May they not thee offend, O noble youth,  
 But may thy heart preserve them till a tongue  
 More wise and holy guide thee to the Truth.

## LXI

' Not among nymphs and sirens, founts and flowers,  
 Not on voluptuous herbage in the shade,  
 But on the toilsome steep, where Virtue towers,  
 Alone, O prince, our supreme good is laid ;  
 Who from the paths of pleasure will not raise  
 His thoughts, nor freeze nor sweat, arrives not there ;  
 And wilt thou, lordly eagle, turn thy gaze  
 From that high goal, and to the vales repair.

## LXII

' Nature thy brow directed toward the skies,  
 And gave thee instincts generous and sublime,  
 To look aloft, and to that glorious prize,  
 By virtuous deeds and brilliant actions, climb.  
 She gave thee, too, a swift and ready ire,  
 But not to use it in each civil broil ;  
 Not that it should thy vaulting fancy fire,  
 And, foe to reason, 'gainst thyself recoil ;



## LXIII

‘ But that thy valour, armed by it, should smite  
With greater force external adversaries,  
And that repressed should be with greater might  
Thy passions—foul, internal enemies.  
Let the sage chief, then, govern and employ  
It in the use for which it was ordained,  
And at his will its too great strength alloy ;  
By him be it now quickened—now restrained.’

## LXIV

He ceased. The other, in attentive mood,  
Treasured those maxims of advice profound ;  
Meek as a child, abashed, ashamed he stood,  
His modest eyelids fixed upon the ground.  
Well did his secret thoughts the sage surmise,  
And to him said : ‘ Raise up thy brow, my son ;  
Upon this sculptured shield affix thine eyes,  
And view the deeds thy ancestors have done.

## LXV

‘ Thy sires’ historic honours thou shalt see,  
Up in that steep and solitary place ;  
And wilt thou, laggard, lag behind, and be  
A tardy runner in the glorious race ?  
Up, up ! arouse thyself, and may what I  
Depict thereon thy generous heart incite !’  
Thus spoke ; and, as he spoke, attentively  
Upon the shield Rinaldo fixed his sight.

## LXVI

With subtile skill, into a narrow space  
The artist had unnumbered forms compressed ;  
The august and glorious line of Azzo's race  
Was there in chain unbroken manifest.  
From its old Roman source each branch renowned,  
Limpid and pure, still uncorrupted flows ;  
With laurel chaplets are its princes crowned,  
Whose deeds in peace and war the old man shows.

## LXVII

Caius he shows, when first to foreign bands  
The empire fell, already in decline,  
The reins of power receive from willing hands,  
And the first prince become of Este's line ;  
To whom for help his weaker neighbours came,  
And him elected ruler over all.  
But when the savage Goths recrossed the same  
Pass as of yore, at base Honorio's call,

## LXVIII

And when all Italy appeared to smoke,  
And blaze more fiercely from barbaric fire ;  
When Rome, too, crouching 'neath the stranger's yoke,  
Feared in the general ruin to expire ;  
Shows how Aurelius, his intrepid son,  
To guard his subjects' liberty stood forth ;  
Shows him Foresto, who opposed the Hun,  
Despotic ruler of the distant North.

## LXIX

Well by his look fierce Attila is known ;  
His eyes like furious dragon's seem to spark ;  
Enough it is, his dog-faced features shown,  
To swear he snarled, and deem you heard him bark.  
Worsted in single fight the savage see,  
Back on his armies for protection fall.  
Here shows the Hector of fair Italy,  
Foresto, guarding Aquilea's wall.

## LXX

His death is blazoned elsewhere, and his own,  
With it, the ruin of his country draws.  
Him Acarino, his great sire's great son,  
Succeeds, as champion of the Italian cause ;  
Who to fate yielded up, not to the Hun,  
Altinum, and to safer quarters fled ;  
Then of a thousand houses formed one town,  
Erst villas thro' the Po's broad valley spread.

## LXXI

Which he with bulwarks fortified, to meet  
The rushing river's overflowing rage :  
Whence a fair city rose, the destined seat  
Of Este's princes in a future age.  
He routs the Alani ; but, unfortunate,  
By Odoacer is at length cut down,  
And dies for Italy. O noble fate !  
That made him consort of his sire's renown.

## LXXII

With him falls Alphorizio. Azzo here  
Is with his brother in sad exile shown ;  
But, with fresh arms, behold him reappear,  
Soon as the Erulean tyrant is o'erthrown.  
Lo ! transfixed by an arrow in the eye,  
Este's Epaminondas follows near ;  
With what delight the patriot seems to die,  
Fierce Totila slain, and saved his buckler dear !

## LXXIII

I speak of Boniface ; whose little son,  
Valerian, in his father's footsteps trod ;  
Nor had a hundred squadrons of the Hun,  
So stout his heart and hand, his charge withstood.  
Ernesto near, with features stern and hard,  
The wild Slavonians gallantly repelled ;  
Before him stands intrepid Aldoard,  
Who 'gainst the Lombard king Monselce held.

## LXXIV

Henry is here, and Berenger ; and where  
The royal standard of great Carlo flies,  
It seems he is fount to strike first blow, and dare,  
As chief or soldier, the most dread emprise ;  
Then under Lewis serves, who bade him war  
Against his nephew, the Italian king ;  
Whom he defeated, and made prisoner.  
Here Otho is, round whom five children cling.

## LXXV

Then Almeric comes ; already Marquis he  
Of the fair city that commands the Po ;  
Founder of churches, in deep reverie  
He stands contemplating the heavens. But, lo !  
Azzo the second is in contrast viewed,  
Waging 'gainst Berenger embittered war ;  
Whom, after varying fortunes, he subdued,  
And so became Italia's emperor.

## LXXVI

His son Alberto then, in Germany, gains  
Such wide extended fame, that as he fought  
And beat in war and tournaments the Danes,  
Him, for his son-in-law, great Otho bought.  
Impetuous Hugo stands behind, who tamed  
The horns of Roman arrogance, and who  
Shall Marquis of fair Italy be named,  
And all the Tuscan provinces subdue.

## LXXVII

Tebaldo here, and Bonifacio there,  
Is sculptured near his darling Beatrice.  
To sire so great, to heritage so fair,  
A male successor envious fate denies.  
But well Matilda the defect made good  
Of numbers and of sex ; the simple gown  
She proved how woman, wise and valorous, could  
Raise far above the mail-clad monarch's crown.

## LXXVIII

Her noble face breathes masculine strength; her glance  
Appears to flash with more than manly might :  
The Normans here are routed ; the advance  
Of Guiscard, yet unconquered, turned to flight ;  
Henry the Fourth is by her arm o'erthrown,  
By her the temple with his flag is graced ;  
And in the Vatican, on Peter's throne,  
By her the Sovereign Pontiff is replaced.

## LXXIX

Azzo the fifth her follows, or his place  
Keeps at her side from reverence and love ;  
But the fourth Azzo's fair and fruitful race  
In wider and more prosperous branches throve.  
Since Guelph, his son, by Cunigond his queen,  
To what he deemed Germania's summons yields,  
And the good Roman stock is haply seen  
By him transplanted to Bavarian fields.

## LXXX

Ingrafted thence, from Este's branches grew  
The Guelphic tree, already waxing old,  
Whose Guelphic offshoots you may see renew,  
More bright than e'er, its diadems of gold ;  
And by the heavenly light's benignant grace,  
No hindrance meeting with, become so tall,  
That, level with the sky, it filled the space  
Of half Germania, and o'ershadowed all.

## LXXXI

Nor less luxuriance seemed the royal tree  
In its Italian branches to diffuse ;  
Bertoldo here confronting Guelph you see ;  
Here the sixth Azzo the old stock renews.  
This ends the list of his heroic sires,  
That life-like on the breathing ore are wrought ;  
Aroused, Rinaldo from his native fires  
A thousand sparks of kindred honour caught :

## LXXXII

And his proud spirit, burning to renew  
His sires' renown, to such a pitch doth rise,  
That, as if present, palpable, and true,  
That seems to float before his ravished eyes,  
Which Fancy's coinage stamped upon the brain :  
The city captured—thousands slaughtered—he  
Impatient arms, and, in reliant vein,  
Usurps anticipated victory.

## LXXXIII

Then Charles, who had of Denmark's royal lord  
Already told him the sad tragedy,  
Placed in his noble hand the destined sword.  
'Take it,' he cried, 'and may it prosperous be ;  
But only use it for the Christian faith ;  
With it, be no less strong than just and true ;  
But first avenge its former master's death,  
Who loved thee so : this much from thee is due.

## LXXXIV

‘Ah, would to Heaven!’ replied the noble knight,  
‘That this my hand, which takes his falchion, may  
The murder of its former lord requite,  
And with it, its indebtedness repay.’  
Charles turning round to him, with look all cheered,  
Into few words unmeasured thanks compressed;  
Meanwhile the noble hermit interfered,  
And to their midnight march the warriors pressed.

## LXXXV

‘Time ’tis,’ he said, ‘to go where you await  
The captain and the camp in fond suspense;  
Come, for I can your course facilitate  
Thro’ the thick darkness to the Christian tents.’  
Thus spoke, then mounts his chariot, and admits  
The noble knights therein without delay;  
And slacking in his coursers’ mouths the bits,  
Lashes them on, and eastward bends his way.

## LXXXVI

Through the black air they fly, abstracted, mute,  
When to the youth the old man turned and said:  
‘Thou hast seen the branches and the ancient root  
Of thy haught lineage from its fountain head;  
Still, tho’ of heroes from Time’s earliest page,  
The glad prolific mother it has been,  
Its former virtues shall not fail from age,  
But shoot forth blossoms, fresh and ever green.



## LXXXVII

‘ And would that, as from Time’s mysterious tomb  
I have drawn forth thy unknown ancestry,  
I could produce, from out the Future’s womb,  
The glorious roll of thy posterity,  
And to the world proclaim their virtues, ere  
Their eyelids dawn upon creation’s light ;  
For thou wouldst see a list of heroes there,  
Not less in number, nor in deeds less bright.

## LXXXVIII

‘ But for the future powerless is my art  
To scan the truth, which far too hidden lies,  
Except where dimly, as thro’ clouds, a part  
Floats like a flickering torch before mine eyes.  
To thee if things as certain I detail,  
In that believe not I am over bold ;  
My knowledge comes from one who, without veil,  
At times doth Heaven’s most secret ways behold.

## LXXXIX

‘ And that which light divine revealed to him,  
He told myself, and I predict to thee ;  
For ne’er in this, or in the good old time,  
Was Goth or Greek or Latin progeny  
Rich in such heroes, as propitious Heaven  
Has destined thy descendants to become :  
Their brilliant names were never equalled even  
By those of Sparta, Carthage, or of Rome.

## XC

‘ But, ’mid the rest, Alphonso I select,  
In title second, but the first in worth ;  
Of men illustrious a complete defect  
And rank corruption will precede his birth.  
He will be such that paladin was ne’er  
Fitter the sword to wield, or sceptre grace,  
Or weight of arms or diadem to bear—  
The highest, chiefest glory of thy race !

## XCI

‘ Boy, he will indicate his chivalry  
In various cruel images of war ;  
Dread of the woods and of wild beasts he’ll be,  
And in the lists prove always conqueror.  
Then back from real warfare he will bear  
Victorious palms on his triumphal yoke,  
And oft his country will adorn his hair  
With wreaths of grass, of laurel, and of oak.

## XCII

‘ In age mature no less will be his praise  
To ’stablish peace and order, and maintain  
His cities calm and tranquil ’mid the frays  
Of powerful neighbours that around him reign ;  
To foster genius, to encourage art,  
Dole with just hand reward and punishment ;  
To noble games magnificence impart,  
And by keen foresight coming ills prevent.

## XCIII

‘And, oh ! if e’er against that impious race,  
That will infest each land and every sea,  
And in those wretched times give laws of peace  
To other nations more enlightened, he  
March forth, bold champion, full revenge to seek  
For shrine destroyed and violated fane,  
What heavy retribution would he wreak  
On the great tyrant and his sect profane !

## XCIV

‘To oppose his power the Moor and Turk might dare,  
With myriad armed legions, but in vain,  
Since far beyond the Euphrates he would bear,  
Beyond the heights of Taurus’ snowy chain,  
Beyond the regions of the torrid zone,  
The Cross, white eagle, and gold fleur-de-lys ;  
And, to baptize the swarthy fronts, the unknown  
Mysterious sources of the Nile would see.’

## XCV

Thus the old sage the youthful knight addressed,  
Who treasured up his words with heartfelt glee,  
Feeling a secret transport in his breast  
At the bare thought of such posterity.  
Meanwhile Aurora, Phœbus’ herald, rose,  
And did the sky with Orient sheen adorn ;  
And now the tents, though distant still, disclose  
Their streamers, fluttering in the breath of morn.

## XCVI

The sage, ere leaving them, began anew :

‘ You see the sun, which brightly shines in front,  
And with its friendly beams unfolds to you

The tents, the plain, the city, and the mount.  
Secure from all impediment and harm,

By unknown tracks I have brought you safely here :  
Now ye can guide yourselves, nor need my arm ;

Approach is not permitted me more near.’

## XCVII

Thus he took leave of them, and went away,

Leaving the cavaliers foot soldiers ; whence  
They, in direction of the rising day,

Pursued the path that led them to the tents.  
Meanwhile fame bore, and in all quarters spread

The expected coming of the three, and on  
Before them to the pious Godfred sped,

Who rose to do them honour from his throne.



## CANTO XVIII.

### I

ARRIVING where the pious chief had gone  
To greet his coming, 'Sire,' Rinaldo said,  
'Twas jealous care of honour led me on,  
To wreak such retribution on the dead ;  
If I have offended thee, that fact offends  
Me to the quick with penitence and pain ;  
Whence at thy call I come, to make amends,  
Far as I can thy favour to regain.'

### II

Low as he humbly bowed, Prince Godfred cast  
His arms around his neck, and thus replied :  
' We'll speak no more of byegones, and the past  
In the dark grave of mute oblivion hide ;  
And for amends, alone thou needest do  
Deeds as of yore ; and for the general good,  
And to the utter ruin of the foe,  
Destroy the monsters of the enchanted wood.

## III

‘That ancient wood, whence formerly we drew  
Materials to repair our tools and arms,  
Has now (I know not to what causes due)  
Become the haunt of formidable charms ;  
To fell its timber not the bravest dare,  
And ’twere a hopeless task to breach the town  
Without such implements. Now thither, where  
The others dread, go, prove thy old renown.’

## IV

Briefly, when he had ceased, the cavalier  
Offered his humble services to lend,  
But from his resolute manner it was clear,  
How much his actions would his words transcend ;  
Then turning round, his comrades’ hands he prest  
Within his own most cordially, for there  
Tancredi, with Prince Guelpho, and the rest  
Of the camp’s paladins, assembled were.

## V

But when he had to those of high degree  
His warm, sincere acknowledgments conveyed,  
‘With humble and familiar courtesy’ \*  
The youth received all those of lower grade ;  
Not denser crowds flocked there, nor did each mouth  
Thunder forth louder cheers, than if in war  
He had conquered all the Orient and the south,  
And back returned on his triumphal car.

\* Shakspeare.

## VI

Escorted thus, he to his tent retired,  
And 'mid a group of his dear comrades stood,  
And much replied to them, and much enquired,  
Now of the war, now of the enchanted wood ;  
But when they, leaving, gave the occasion, thus  
Spoke the saint hermit : ' Many a wondrous scene  
And strange adventures, pilgrim marvellous,  
Thou hast in the course of thy long wanderings seen.

## VII

' Think what to earth's Almighty King thou ow'st,  
Who brought thee safely from the enchanted hold,  
And the strayed lamb, that was so nearly lost,  
Led back again, and sheltered in his fold ;  
And by Prince Godfred's voice selected thee  
As second agent of His sovran will :  
But 'twere not right in His high ministry  
Thy hand to arm, profaned, polluted still.

## VIII

' So soiled art thou from earth's impurity,  
And from uncleanness of the flesh, not e'en  
The Nile, the Ganges, or the soundless sea,  
Sufficient were to make thee pure and clean :  
God's grace alone can cleanse and purify  
Man's unclean state, and wash his sins away ;  
Turn then to Him, to Him for grace apply,  
Thy secret sins confess, and weep and pray.'

## IX

At this, he first within himself laments,  
How he in love and anger had transgressed,  
Then sadly, and with deepest penitence,  
Low at his feet his juvenile sins confessed ;  
When, absolution given, Heaven's servant said :  
' Depart thou must at early dawn and pray,  
There on the summit of yon mount, whose head  
Fronts the fresh splendour of the breaking day.

## X

' Then to the dread enchanted forest go,  
Which in such numbers phantoms false infest ;  
Monsters and giants thou'lt o'ercome, I know,  
If no new madness thy advance arrest ;  
Ah, let no voice, how sweet it weep or sing,  
Let not seductive smile or eloquent eyes,  
Round thy young heart their fascinations fling,  
But their false faces and false prayers despise.'

## XI

As the sage counselled, so prepared the knight,  
Eager and hopeful for the high emprise,  
And the day passed in thought, in thought the night ;  
But long before Aurora lit the skies,  
He put his gorgeous glittering armour on,  
And a new surcoat of strange colours took,  
And then on foot, in silence and alone,  
His dear companions and his tent forsook.



## XII

It was that moment when the unyielding night  
Still strove for empire with the crescent morn,  
Flushed was the Orient with the dawn's first light,  
And still some stars did heaven's expanse adorn ;  
When to Mount Olivet he 'gan repair,  
With eyes raised up, contemplating around  
The nightly here, the matin beauty there,  
With incorruptible heavenly splendour crowned.

## XIII

And inly thought : ' Oh, what surpassing light  
In yon celestial temple we behold ;  
The day possesses his great car, the night  
Her moon of silver and her stars of gold :  
Yet grovelling man nor that nor these doth prize,  
But all his thoughts on that dim gleam bestows,  
Which flash of smile and lightning of the eyes  
In the scant limits of frail face disclose.'

## XIV

Thus musing, he to the hill's summit went,  
And there, low bending and with reverence, raised  
His thoughts sublime beyond the firmament,  
And on the east with fervent rapture gazed.  
' Father and Lord ! with eye of clemency  
This my first life, these my first errors view ;  
Shower down, O God, thy favour, and in me  
Purge the old Adam, and my heart renew.'

## XV

The vermeil dawn, as thus Rinaldo prayed,  
Now living gold become, arose in front ;  
It gilt his casque and armour, and arrayed  
In gold the verdant summit of the mount.  
He felt the spirit of the grateful air  
With its soft breath his brow and bosom fan,  
While o'er his head, wrung from Aurora's hair,  
A crystal shower of pearly dewdrops ran.

## XVI

Upon his surcoat, that seemed ashes gray,  
Heaven's dew fell down and rebaptized the knight,  
Washed it, and took its mournful tint away,  
And in its place induced a lucid white.  
Thus their spoilt foliage withered flowers resume,  
Refreshed, recruited, by the matin cold ;  
Blithe serpents so renew their youthful bloom,  
And gleam bedizened in fresh scales of gold.

## XVII

The whiteness of his changed accoutrements  
Ev'n he himself with admiration viewed,  
And, with bold heart and buoyant confidence,  
His course directed towards the antique wood.  
He had arrived now where alone the fear  
Its sight inspired, the less courageous stayed :  
To him not fearful did the wood appear—  
No gloom he saw, but only pleasant shade.

## XVIII

Onwards he passed, and caught a sound meanwhile  
That round diffused most dulcet melody ;  
Heard the hoarse murmur of a brawling rill,  
And, 'mid the forest's leaves, the breezes sigh ;  
Lyres, organs, human voices, and the wail,  
The dying wail, of the melodious swan,  
With plaintive answer of the nightingale,  
And all these various sounds expressed in one.

## III

As happened to the rest, the cavalier  
Expecting was loud thunder's fearful tone,  
But did descant of nymphs and sirens hear,  
Of air, of water, and of birds alone.  
Whence blank bewilderment enchained his feet,  
Then slowly he advanced, nor on the road  
Did other hindrance or obstruction meet,  
Save where a tranquil stream before him flowed.

## XX

Odours perfumed, and Nature's choicest charms  
Pranked either bank, that sweetly smiled and smelt ;  
And the stream so far stretched its circling arms,  
That the great forest sat within its belt ;  
And not alone a garland round it made,  
But a branch parted, and between it flowed :  
So, with fair change of water and of shade,  
Wood screened the water, water bathed the wood.

## XXI

While the knight looked to find a ford, behold !  
Spanning the stream, a wondrous bridge appeared ;  
A gorgeous bridge of brightly burnished gold,  
That formed a road, on massive arches reared.  
He crossed the golden passage, which fell down  
Soon as his foot had touched the opposite shore,  
And the stream, now into a torrent grown,  
With it away the crumbling fabric bore.

## XXII

He turned, and saw that to a flood profound  
Had grown the stream, as if from melted snow,  
Which, voluble in itself, whirled round and round,  
In thousand eddies, as it dashed below.  
Still keen desire of fresh adventure drew  
The eager youth that dense old wood to see,  
And in that sylvan waste some wonder new  
Excited aye his curiosity.

## XXIII

Where'er, in passing, did his foot repose,  
There flowers sprang up or living crystal gushed ;  
Here oped the lily, there burst forth the rose ;  
Here water leaped, there in a river rushed .  
And o'er and round him the old wood its bloom  
Seemed to renew ; the rugged bark was seen  
To soften, the whole forest to assume  
A look more joyous and a tint more green.

## XXIV

With manna rorid was each teeming tree,  
And odorous honey from its bark distilled ;  
Again that sweet unearthly harmony  
The air with song and lamentation filled.  
Nor knew he where was hid the human choir,  
That with the air, the swan, and waters blent,  
Nor saw the organ or mysterious lyre,  
Nor those that made such sweet accompaniment.

## XXV

But while he gazed round, and belief denied  
To what his senses offered him as true,  
Standing apart, a myrtle he descried,  
Where a piazza closed the avenue ;  
Its towering branches the strange myrtle spread  
The haughty palm and cypress far above :  
There, raising past all other trees its head,  
Appeared to be the palace of the grove.

## XXVI

In the piazza the knight saw, surprised,  
Still greater novelties ; for in the earth  
Appeared an oak, that, of itself incised,  
Opened its pregnant bosom, and gave birth.  
Whence issued forth, arrayed in wondrous guise,  
A lovely nymph, in beauty's ripe bloom ;  
At the same time a hundred plants he spies,  
Producing each a nymph from out its womb.

## XXVII

As sylvan goddesses display their charms  
Upon the stage, or in some painting fair,  
With tucked-up dresses and uncovered arms,  
With dainty buskins and dishevelled hair,  
The rugged trees' fictitious daughters so  
Appeared Rinaldo's startled gaze before,  
Save that, instead of quiver and of bow,  
A viol this, that lute or cittern bore.

## XXVIII

They then began to carol and dance round,  
And of themselves inwove a garland, whence  
They in their cirque the youthful warrior bound,  
As point within its own circumference.  
They bound the tree, too, and these words of love  
Were all he could, amid their descant, glean :  
' Welcome, thrice welcome, to this pleasant grove,  
Thou cherished hope and idol of our queen !

## XXIX

' Longed for, thou com'st, the patient to restore,  
Consumed, exhausted by love's wasting flame :  
This wood, so dreary, and so dark before,  
And which so well her dolorous life became,  
At thy approach resumes its gaiety,  
And in still lovelier form is clothed anew.'  
Such was the song ; when from the myrtle tree  
Issued sweet sounds, and then it oped in two.

## XXX

Within Sileni, in the days of yore,  
Our sires saw wondrous images enclosed,  
But this large myrtle, from its opened core,  
A far more rare and lovely form exposed ;  
It showed a woman, whose false look excelled  
An angel's in its loveliness and grace.  
Rinaldo gazed, and fancied he beheld  
Armida's likeness, and her witching face.

## XXXI

Half glad, half sorrowful, the youth she eyed ;  
A thousand feelings centred in one look.  
' I see thee, then ; thou, then, at length,' she cried,  
' Returnest back to her whom you forsook.  
Why art thou here ? Is't by thy presence now  
To cheer my widowed nights and mournful days ?  
Or to wage war, and drive me hence, that thou  
But show'st thine arms, and hid'st thy lovely face ?

## XXXII

' Com'st thou as friend or foe ? 'Twas not for foes  
I caused the bridge like magic to appear,  
Nor oped the stream, the fountain, and the rose,  
To smooth a passage for thy coming here.  
Bare, then, thy brow, remove that envious crest,  
And, if still friend, fix thy dear eyes on mine ;  
Join lip to lip once more, and breast to breast ;  
Or take at least this trembling hand in thine.'

## XXXIII

She went on still addressing him, and rolled  
(Pallid as death) in piteous cirques her eyes,  
Dissembling and deceiving as of old,  
With melting tears, sweet sobs, and deep-drawn sighs.  
It would have moved a heart of stone to hear  
The flood of anguish the false siren poured ;  
But the forewarned, not heartless, cavalier  
No longer waited, but unsheathed his sword ;

## XXXIV

And straight proceeded to the myrtle tree,  
Which she embraced, and, interposing, cried :  
' Hold ! nor inflict such outrage upon me ;  
Thou wouldst not, surely, my dear trunk divide ?  
Lay down thy sword, or, cruel as thou art,  
Let it the life-blood of Armida drain :  
To this dear myrtle, through this breast, this heart,  
Alone a passage can thy falchion gain.'

## XXXV

Deaf to her prayer, he raised his sword, while she  
(O novel prodigy !) transformed became.  
Thus metamorphosed suddenly we see  
One figure to another in a dream ;  
So waxed her limbs, and turned to swarthy hue  
Of her fair face the pink and ivory charms ;  
She to a most colossal giant grew—  
Briareus, armed with a hundred arms.



## XXXVI

Fifty broad swords she griped, and fifty shields  
Clashed with defiant menace in his ear.  
Each other nymph, now horrid Cyclops, wields  
Falchion and targe ; but still he felt no fear:  
Nay, on the guarded plant renewed his blows,  
Which 'neath them groaned, as animate it were ;  
While in such numbers ghosts and monsters rose,  
That Stygian fields appeared the fields of air.

## XXXVII

Beneath, earth thundered ; overhead, the skies  
Lightened, and quaked the vast terrestrial sphere ;  
Warred the wild elements, and in his eyes  
With fury smote him. Still the cavalier  
Paused not a moment, tho' the lightning gleamed,  
Nor in his stroke or purpose ever erred.  
He felled the nut—'tis nut that myrtle seemed—  
The charm was broke, the spirits disappeared.

## XXXVIII

Heaven fair became, the tempest passed away,  
The wood returned unto its natural state :  
Not from enchantments dreadful, still not gay ;  
Replete with gloom, but gloom that was innate.  
Then tried the victor, and retried again,  
If aught else hindered him the wood to hew ;  
And, smiling, said : 'Ye semblances ! how vain,  
How weak is man to be deterred by you !'

## XXXIX

His lonely way then towards the camp pursued,  
Where Peter meanwhile cried, excitedly :  
' O'ercome's the dread enchantment of the wood—  
Returns the victor from his victory.  
Lo ! where he comes ! ' Afar was seen to loom  
The snow-white mantle of Bertholdo's son,  
And, with unwonted sheen, the silver plume  
Of Este's eagle glistened in the sun.

## XL

Arrived, the camp acknowledged its delight  
By deafening plaudits for the victory won ;  
And pious Godfred welcomed back the knight  
With highest honours, that were grudged by none.  
' Sire,' said Rinaldo, ' to the dreadful wood  
I went, and saw it, as thou orderedst me ;  
I saw, and its enchantments have subdued :  
Send, then, the workmen there—the ways are free.'

## XLI

To the old wood they went, and felled each bough  
That practised judgment for the purpose chose.  
And tho' the unskilled workmen knew not how  
The first machines adroitly to compose ;  
This time an artist of celebrity  
The ponderous beams with pliant withies wove ;  
William, the Genoese chief, who on the sea  
Was wont as corsair formerly to rove.

## XLII

Forced to retire then, to the Saracen  
He yielded up dominion of the seas,  
And from the ships now brought both arms and men  
To the encampment as auxiliaries.  
Nor could one, 'mid the most intelligent,  
His peer in knowledge of mechanics find ;  
With him a hundred minor workmen went,  
To execute the plans that he designed.

## XLIII

He at once began, not only to compose  
Balistæ, catapults, and rams, and each  
Machine that could with the high ramparts close,  
Destroy their fences, and the bastions breach ;  
But made a greater work, a wondrous tower,  
With planks of pine and fir enwove inside ;  
And to protect it from the fire-balls' shower,  
Without, wrapped up in swathes of moistened hide.

## XLIV

The fabric takes to pieces and unites,  
With joints together joined by subtile art ;  
And a huge beam with ram's head tipped, that fights  
Ram-like, emerges from the lower part.  
Midway leaps forth a bridge, and with such power,  
As at first spring to reach the adverse wall ;  
And from the top shoots up a lesser tower,  
That grows, forced upwards, and looks over all.

## XLV

Voluble, on a hundred wheels, to glide  
It 'gan along the smoothened ways, and tho'  
Pregnant with arms, pregnant with men inside,  
Without much labour it appeared to go.  
The troops stood watching, with astonished eyes,  
The workmen's quickness and dexterity,  
When, lo ! two other towers were seen to rise,  
That of the first twin sisters seemed to be.

XLVI *Rm*

Meanwhile the Christians' doings were not al-  
Together hidden from the Saracens,  
Since, towards the nearest points, upon the wall  
Were stationed guards to watch the Franks' designs ;  
Great loads of pine and elm trees from the wood  
They saw conducted to the Christian host ;  
Machines they saw, but not entirely could  
Their form distinguish from their distant post.

## XLVII

They, too, made engines, and with no less art  
The towers and ramparts reinforced again,  
And raised them up so, in whatever part  
Ill-fitted seemed war's fury to sustain,  
That they believed the greatest force of Mars  
Henceforth unable was to take the town ;  
But, beyond all defence, Ismene prepares  
Strange fires upon the assailants to throw down.

## XLVIII

The wretch with sulphur did bitumen mix,  
Brought from the lake of Sodom ; and to hell  
Methinks he went, and from the river Styx,  
That nine times girds it, was supplied as well.  
Such smoke and stench he in the fire-balls wrought,  
Which, burning hot, were darted in the face ;  
Well by those dread combustibles he thought  
To avenge of his fell'd forest the disgrace.

## XLIX

While thus the camp prepared for the assault,  
And the beleaguered city for defence,  
Lo ! swiftly skimming the aerial vault,  
A dove was seen to cross the Gallic tents :  
Nor moved her pinions, but with outstretched wing  
The pilgrim messenger came sailing down  
Through the lush fields of air, as if to bring,  
From the high clouds, a message to the town ;

## L

When swooped a falcon—from I know not whence,  
Armed with great talons and hooked beak, as tho'  
To oppose her 'twixt the city and the tents ;  
But she awaited not his cruel blow ;  
He, darting down, pursued her as she fled  
To Godfred's tent, and nearer, nearer drew ;  
His talons almost struck her gentle head,  
When to the prince's sheltering lap she flew.

## LI

Her he protected, as she frightened clung,  
And saw, examining, a curious thing ;  
For from her neck, bound by a ribbon, hung  
A folded letter hid beneath her wing ;  
He opes, unfolds it, and the not long whole  
Of its contents completely comprehends.  
' To Judah's lord ' (so ran the secret scroll)  
' The Egyptian captain health and greeting sends.

## LII

' Do not despair, O king, resist, and wait  
For four days longer, or for five at most,  
When I will come these walls to liberate,  
By conquering 'neath them the besieging host.'  
This was the secret which the missive bore,  
In rude barbaric characters displayed,  
And to the dove entrusted ; for of yore  
Such envoys letters in the East conveyed.

## LIII

Prince Godfred set the captive turtle free,  
Who having thus her master's secrets bared,  
To him a rebel deemed herself to be,  
Nor to return, successful envoy, dared.  
The greater chief did then the minor call,  
Showed them the letter, and exclaimed : ' Behold,  
How the high providence of God has all  
The foe's designs to His believers told.

## LIV

‘We must no more, then, dally or delay,  
But new approaches ’gainst the heights commence,  
Nor spare fatigue or trouble, that we may  
O’ercome the crags that form the south’s defence ;  
Hard it may be to make a path there ; still,  
Make it we can : the ground is known to me ;  
Be sure that wall, protected by the hill,  
With arms and works must less defended be.

## LV

‘Thou must, Raimondo, the steep ramparts storm,  
With thy machines, on that less guarded part,  
While I my force, in line extended, form  
’Gainst the north gate ; deluded by which art,  
The baffled foe may tranquilly await  
Our chief attack and greatest efforts there,  
While I my easy-moving tower translate  
Some distance off, and carry war elsewhere.

## LVI

‘At the same time, Camillus, I rely  
That the third tower thou bring not far from mine.’  
He ceased, when Raymond, who was sitting nigh,  
And weighed, as he was speaking, his design,  
Exclaimed : ‘We cannot add to or amend  
Prince Godfred’s plan, save one thing more, which I  
Venture to add, that we should some one send,  
The secrets of the hostile camp to spy,

## LVII

‘Who may recount their numbers, and divine,  
Far as he can, the purpose of our foes.’  
Tancredi added : ‘ There’s a squire of mine  
Whom for this office I would fain propose ;  
Ready, adroit, and light of foot he is,  
And daring—but discretionally daring ;  
He speaks in many tongues, and can disguise  
His real voice, his movements, and his bearing.’

## LVIII

Summoned, he came, and when he understood  
That which Prince Godfred and his lord desired,  
He smiled with confidence, and said he would  
With pleasure undertake the charge required.  
‘ Unrecognised as spy, I will be soon  
Where that camp’s tents are pitched ; I’ll penetrate  
Into their works by the broad light of noon,  
And every man and horse enumerate.

## LIX

‘ The numbers and condition of that host,  
And their chief’s thoughts, I promise to impart ;  
His inmost sense to bring to light I boast,  
And wrest the closest secrets from his heart.’  
Vafrino tarried not, as thus he spoke,  
But made display of a bare neck, exchanged  
His simple doublet for a flowing cloak,  
And folds of linen round his brow arranged.



## LX

A Syrian bow and quiver round him slung,  
Barbaric seemed his every gest : beside  
So versed he was, and quick in every tongue,  
That those who heard him speak were stupefied ;  
In Tyre Phœnician, or in Memphis all  
Had him Egyptian deemed. Upon a horse  
Away he rode, whose feet so lightly fall,  
That in the sand one scarce could track their course.

## LXI

Before the third day dawned, the Franks had made  
Level the steep and broken ways, and there  
Had even their immense machines conveyed,  
Since their fatigues uninterrupted were ;  
Nay, joined they had to labour of the day,  
Stealing it from the hours of rest, the night ;  
Nor was there aught that could them more delay  
From making final trial of their might.

## LXII

Much of the day preceding the attack  
In solemn prayer the pious Buglion spent,  
And bade the host confess their sins, and take  
At the Lord's table the soul's sacrament.  
The greatest demonstration he then made,  
Where least to employ his huge machines he thought ;  
Deluded whence, the Turks with joy surveyed  
Against the strongest gate his engines brought.

## LXIII

Then when dark night had spread her ebon pall,  
He had his huge machine transported where  
Less luniform and salient was the wall,  
Nor angles nor projecting outworks were.  
With his armed turret, Raymond far and wide  
The town commanded from the mountain's crest ;  
Camillus his advanced upon that side  
Which from the north bends somewhat to the west.

## LXIV

But when the matin herald of the day  
Had in the east proclaimed the coming dawn,  
The Pagans saw, and saw to their dismay,  
That the tower was from its old place withdrawn ;  
Here, too, they saw another mass oppose  
Its frowning front, and there another stood,  
While rams, cats, catapults, balistæ rose  
In countless numbers in the neighbourhood.

## LXV

At this the Syrian people were not slack  
Thither divers defences to transfer,  
Where Godfred now directed his attack,  
From where his engines first paraded were.  
But he, remembering that the Egyptian host  
Lay in his rear, that pass had occupied ;  
And calling Guelph and the two Roberts : ' Post  
Your squadrons here, and take good care,' he cried,

## LXVI

'That while I means to scale the ramparts find,  
Where the defences not so strong appear,  
There be no force that, coming from behind,  
Pours unexpected battle on our rear.'  
He ceased, and from three sides three columns closed,  
To storm the walls of the devoted town.  
From three sides, too, his hordes the king opposed,  
Who wore that day his arms, long since laid down.

## LXVII

He whose frail body tottering was from years,  
And its inertness in its own weight shows,  
Arms, which he long since had abandoned, bears,  
And against Raymond's force in person goes.  
'Gainst Godfred, Solyman ; Arganté sped  
To meet the assault of brave Camillus, who  
By Boemond's nephew was accompanied,  
Whom Fortune led to slay his destined foe.

## LXVIII

The archers first began the dire attack  
With showers of poisoned shafts, that seemed to shroud  
The azure sky, which suddenly grew black  
Beneath the arrows' intervening cloud ;  
But with more deadly force, the fiercest shocks  
Came from the mural engines, whence huge balls,  
Of marble made, and massy ponderous oaks,  
With iron tipt, were launched against the walls.

## LXIX

A rattling thunderbolt seemed every stone,  
And so crashed limbs and armour where it fell,  
As to annihilate not life alone,  
But shape of body and of face as well  
Nor paused the missiles in their bloody route  
At the impact, but passed with unslaked might  
In at one side and through the other out,  
Bequeathing death in their remorseless flight.

## LXX

Still that fierce onslaught did not drive away  
From their defence the Saracens ; each brings  
Against the rams that on the ramparts play  
Elastic stuffs, and other yielding things.  
Whence finding no resistance as they closed,  
The furious strokes grew fainter and more slack ;  
While they, where'er the Franks were most exposed,  
With flying arms sent bitter answer back.

## LXXI

But all their efforts ineffectual were  
The three assaulting columns to restrain,  
Which keep advancing under mantlets, where  
Fell down the densest showers of shafts in vain ;  
Some bring the towers close to the rampart's ridge,  
And them the Turks with all their might shove back :  
Each turret now attempts to launch its bridge ;  
Ram-like, the iron-headed rams attack.

## LXXII

Meanwhile Rinaldo paused, irresolute,  
Deeming such risks unworthy of his fame,  
And that it would detract from his repute  
To advance with crowds, and by a path the same :  
Whence, looking round him, he resolved to try  
Alone that way that made the rest despair,  
Determined where the ramparts are most high,  
And most defended, his assault to bear.

## LXXIII

And turning round to those famed warriors, who  
Were formerly by Prince Dudoné led ;  
' Shame, shame ! amid such feats of arms, that you  
Let yonder wall abide in peace,' he said.  
' To the courageous every path is plain,  
And every danger to true valour yields ; '  
Let us then on, and 'gainst their arrowy rain  
A tortoise form with our united shields.'

## LXXIV

At once all joined him at that sharp reproof,  
And raised their shields above their heads, to form,  
By thus conjoining them, an iron roof  
Against the pelting of that horrid storm.  
Sheltered beneath it, the impetuous band  
Dashed on, and nothing could arrest their course,  
Since the testudo's solid roof sustained  
All that fell down with weightiest deadliest force.

## LXXV

Beneath the walls they are. Rinaldo now  
Rears a huge ladder, formed of many a rung ;  
Wind moves less easily an aspen bough,  
Than his strong arm the unwieldy burden swung.  
Now bolts, beams, columns, bastions, plunge below,  
But vainly are to check his progress thrown ;  
Fearless, unmoved, he had persisted, tho'  
Olympus, joined with Ossa, had fallen down.

## LXXVI

Upon his shield a mount in ruins breaks ;  
With groves of shafts his shoulders are o'erspread ;  
With one hand he the adjacent rampart shakes,  
And lifts the other to protect his head.  
His bold example his companions fires  
To daring deeds ; nor doth he mount alone :  
To scale the walls each gallant Frank aspires,  
But not on all the same good fortune shone.

## LXXVII

Some die—some fall : sublime Rinaldo fights,  
Cheers on his own, and flouts the adverse bands,  
And mounts so high, that the embattled heights  
He grasps already with extended hands.  
Great numbers now push, press, repress, and try  
To hurl—but can't—the hero from his post.  
Strange sight ! a single being to descry,  
Pendent in air, resist a compact host !

## LXXVIII

Resist, advance, make good his ground doth he ;  
The combat seemed his youthful blood to fire ;  
Like palm borne down by weights, his gallantry  
But mounted up, from being depressed, the higher.  
At length he vanquished all his foes, and burst  
Thro' every obstacle, and on the rim  
Sprang of the wall, and mastered it the first,  
And made it safe for those that followed him.

## LXXIX

And he himself, with scarcely room to stand,  
To Godfred's brother, who seemed like to fall,  
Stretched out his friendly and victorious hand,  
And helped him second to ascend the wall.  
Meanwhile to Godfred had occurred elsewhere  
Fortunes diverse, with varied perils fraught ;  
Since not alone with man, man battled there,  
But ev'n the engines with each other fought.

## LXXX

Upon the walls the Turks a trunk had slung,  
That had the mast of some great vessel been,  
To which, transversely, a huge beam was swung,  
With iron shod : this terrible machine,  
Being first drawn back by ropes, then forward fell,  
Heavy and hard, in its resistless route ;  
At times the tortoise entered in its shell,  
At times, with neck extended, darted out.

## LXXXI

Upon the tower outleaped the monster beam,  
And 'gan such fierce, such terrible attack,  
That each well-woven, strongly knitted seam,  
It caused to gape, and forced the turret back.  
Prepared, however, for such risks it stood,  
Nor failed with two great sickles to retort ;  
Which, launched forth skilfully against the wood,  
The cordage cut that formed its sole support.

## LXXXII

As an enormous boulder that decay  
Has loosed, or wind uprooted from some mount,  
Comes crashing down, and with it sweeps away  
Woods, cattle, cots ; so from the frowning front  
Of the high wall o'erwhelmed the horrid block  
Arms, soldiers, merlons, as down, down it bounded !  
Once, twice the turret trembled at the shock :  
The ramparts quaked, the echoing hills resounded.

## LXXXIII

Godfred pushed on triumphantly ahead,  
Already deeming that the walls were won ;  
But felt, as on his followers he led,  
Right in his face dense fetid fireballs thrown ;  
Ne'er from cavernous Mongibello rise  
Such torrents of sulphureous lava ; ne'er  
Such reeking vapours rain from Indian skies  
When summer heats inflame the arid air.



## LXXXIV

Alive with fire are vases, hoops, and spears,  
These lurid black, these bright and bloody red ;  
Smoke blinds their eyes, the whizzing stuns their ears,  
The stench is poisonous, the flames catch and spread.  
The moistened hides will prove but poor defence  
To save the tower : small aid they render—see !  
They sweat, they shrivel ; and if Providence  
His help delay, all must consumèd be.

## LXXXV

The noble leader, all his troops before,  
Stood without change of colour or of place,  
Cheering them on the crackling skins to pour  
Water, provided against such a case.  
Such sad condition were they brought down to,  
That even now of water there was lack,  
When, lo ! a wind, that of a sudden blew,  
Against its authors drove the wild fire back.

## LXXXVI

The whirlwind blew against the fire, which turned  
Back on the soft materials which the Turks  
Hung from the walls ; soon caught they were and burned,  
Depriving thus of all defence their works.  
Oh, glorious captain ! whom the Almighty Lord  
Protecteth so, and so esteemeth dear,  
For thee unsheathed is Heaven's immortal sword,  
Thy trumpet's call the obedient breezes hear.

## LXXXVII

But impious Ismene, who beheld the breeze  
Against himself drive back the sulphurous rain,  
Resolved once more to try his sorceries  
The adverse wind and nature to constrain.  
So, 'twixt two witches that attended him,  
He showed himself upon the walls ; his beard  
Was foul, and he so squalid was and grim,  
That Pluto 'twixt two Furies he appeared.

## LXXXVIII

To mutter those dread words he had begun  
So feared by Styx and Phlegethon ; and now  
The air became unsettled, and the sun  
With clouds obscure begirt his radiant brow,  
When there was launched forth an enormous rock,  
Part of a mountain, from the tower of wood,  
Which caught them in such manner that the stroke  
Made of the three one mass of bones and blood.

## LXXXIX

Into such small and bloody bits were smashed  
Their impious heads, so broken all their bones,  
That corn was never more completely mashed  
Beneath the weight of the revolving stones ;  
With many a curse and groan the spirits fell,  
Left the serene and sunshine of the sky,  
And howling fled to the black shades of hell.  
Hence learn, presumptuous mortals ! piety.

## XC

Meanwhile the turret, which the friendly squall  
Saved from the flames, approached the town so near,  
That it was able on the embattled wall  
To place and firmly fix its bridge ; but there  
Like lightning rushed intrepid Solyman :  
To cut it down redoubled were his blows,  
And sure the narrow pass he had cut down,  
But that another tower before him rose.

## XCI

The mighty mass increasing past the height  
Of highest fabrics, shot into the air.  
The Saracens at the portentous sight  
Of Salem lower, panic-stricken were ;  
But tho' on him the stones fell thick and hard,  
The fiery Turk would not desert his post,  
Nor to cut down the fatal bridge despaired,  
And chid and cheered the cowards of the host.

## XCII

The Archangel Michael, visible to none,  
Appearèd then before Prince Godfred's sight,  
Clad in such glistering armour, that the sun,  
Altho' unclouded, had appeared less bright.  
'The hour has come, O pious prince,' he cries,  
'From her fell yoke Jerusalem to free ;  
Droop not, nay, droop not thy bedazzled eyes :  
See with what forces Heaven assisteth thee.

## XCIII

‘ Lift up thine eyes, then, and behold the immense  
Immortal host assembled in the sky,  
While the thick clouds that dim thy mortal sense,  
And overshadow thy humanity,  
I will asunder rend, that thou mayst there  
Regard unbodied spirits face to face,  
And the divine effulgent radiance bear,  
Of angels’ beauty for a little space.

## XCIV

‘ Behold yon spirits that Christ’s champions were,  
Now blest immortal tenants of the skies,  
Combat with thee, with thee still seek to share  
The crowning honour of the great emprise ;  
Lo, where the dust with wreaths of smoke unites,  
And o’er the crumbling ruin darkly lowers ;  
In that dense cloud the gallant Hugo fights,  
And shaketh the foundations of the towers.

## XCV

‘ There, as in life, the lofty northern gate  
Dudoné see with fire and sword assail,  
Arm the assailants and them animate,  
The scaling ladders which he holds, to scale ;  
He, who enrobed in venerable stole,  
And crowned with mitre, stands upon the hill,  
Is Bishop Ademar, thrice happy soul !  
See how on you he signs his blessing still.

## XCVI

‘Lift up still higher thy glowing eyes, upon  
Heaven’s host entire together joined.’ Whence he  
Looked up, and saw them all drawn out in one  
Innumerable, wingèd soldiery.  
In three great squadrons, each extended wide,  
And in three ranks, was ranged the heavenly host,  
Which more extended, as the more outside  
The circles were, and least where innermost.

## XCVII

Here he cast down, o’erpowered, then raised his eyes,  
Nor more the glorious spectacle could see,  
But looking round upon his troops, descries  
That from all sides on them shone victory.  
Some followed where Rinaldo led the way,  
And slew the Syrians that dared make a stand.  
Godfred at this could brook no more delay,  
But snatched an ensign from its bearer’s hand,

## XCVIII

And was the first to pass the bridge ; on it  
The soldan stood, his passage to oppose ;  
Small space sufficed for valour infinite,  
Which for its proof required not many blows.  
‘For others’ lives,’ cried fiery Solyman,  
‘My own I give a sacrifice to be ;  
Cut down the bridge behind me, tho’ alone,  
No easy victim shall they find in me.’

## XCIX

But, seeing towards him irate Rinaldo wend,  
And that the Turks before him frightened fled,  
'What shall I do? If here my life I spend,  
I spend and waste it uselessly,' he said.  
Then planning new defences backward falls,  
And yields free passage to the chief across :  
Who, threatening, followed, and on Salem's walls  
Planted the standard of the Sacred Cross.

## C

The victor ensign waved in myriad wreaths  
Proudly, as conscious of the victory won ;  
On it the air, it seemed, more softly breathes,  
On it more brilliantly to shine the sun ;  
And every lance and arrow launched 'gainst it  
Seemed or to shun it or rebound from thence :  
And Sion and the mountain opposite  
Their heads to bow, with joy and reverence.

## CI

From the whole force then burst triumphant cheers  
At their great joyous victory : and among  
The hills, in answer to the cavaliers'  
Last shouts, reverberating echoes rung.  
At the same moment Tancred overthrew  
All the defences that Arganté made,  
And his bridge launching forth, passed swiftly too,  
And on the walls the purple Cross displayed.

## CII

But, towards the south, where hoary Raymond fought  
With varying odds against the Syrian king,  
As yet the Gascon cavaliers could not  
Up to the battlements their turret bring,  
Since the king's troops, with stubborn resolute will,  
All efforts of the enemy defied :  
And if the wall was there less solid, still,  
With engines it was better fortified.

## CIII

Besides that greater hindrance in that part  
Than elsewhere the unwieldy turret found ;  
Nor could their utmost exercise of art  
O'ercome the rugged nature of the ground.  
Meanwhile, the Gascons and the Pagans too  
Heard victory's loud and long-continued strain,  
From which both Raymond and the tyrant knew  
The city had been taken towards the plain.

## CIV

Whence with a cheer, ' Hark ! hark ! the city's won,'  
To his companions gallant Raymond cries ;  
' Won, shall it us resist ? Shall we alone  
Not share the honour of the great emprise ?'  
Despairing of prolonged defence, at length  
King Aladine retreated, nor did halt  
Until he reached a fortress of great strength,  
Where he still trusted to sustain the assault.

## CV

Then entered pell-mell the victorious host  
Thro' the wide gates, not by the walls alone,  
Since every strong defence, each sheltered post,  
Now open lay, burnt, battered, overthrown ;  
Here stalked the falchion's Fury, there Death goes,  
By Mourning and Despair accompanied ;  
In clotted pools here stagnates blood, there flows  
In rivers from the dying and the dead.





## CANTO XIX.

### I

NOW death, or prudence, or o'erwhelming dread  
Had all the Turks removed from the defence.  
On the won walls alone Arganté stayed,  
With dogged and persistent confidence.  
Still, with unflinching look and resolute eye,  
He sought the sad disaster to redeem.  
He feared to be driven backward, not to die ;  
And, even dying, would unconquered seem.

### II

But, bitterer far than all his enemies,  
On came Tancredi, and resumed their feud ;  
Nor was Arganté slow to recognise,  
By the proud bearing, arms, and attitude,  
The knight he had fought with, and who promised  
In six days to return, nor kept his plight.  
Whence : ' Is it thus thou keepest faith ? ' he said,  
' Is it thus returns Tancredi to the fight ?

## III

'Late thou return'st, and not alone, still I  
Grudge not another trial of thy might,  
Altho' thou seemest, in a soldier's eye,  
More like inventor of machines than knight ;  
But bring strange arms and engines to this spot,  
Go make a shield of thy mechanic bands ;  
Ev'n then, bold slayer of women, thou shalt not  
Again escape destruction at my hands.'

## IV

Tancredi smiled with most profound disdain,  
And in these haughty terms replied : 'Tho' be  
Late my return, yet well assured remain  
That soon enough it will appear to thee ;  
Nay, thou wilt wish that 'twixt thyself and me  
Vast oceans rolled, or Alps rose up, since here,  
By bitter proof, bold braggart, thou shalt see  
If I was stopped by cowardice or fear.

## V

'Stand forth, then, thou that deignest to chastise  
Giants, and doughty demigods alone :  
Thee to thy teeth the woman-slayer defies.'  
Thus him addressed ; then, turning to his own,  
Bade them retire, and their revenge forego,  
Nor hurt Arganté, or in life or limb :  
'For he is less public than my private foe :  
Old reckonings bind me closely unto him.'

## VI

‘Ev’n as thou wilt, escorted or alone,  
Come down,’ the savage Saracen replied :  
‘Select the ground most crowded or most lone ;  
Whate’er the odds, I do not quit thy side.  
Received the challenge, in such terms conveyed,  
They went concordant to the mortal strife,  
Accompanied by rancorous Hate, who made  
One foe the champion of the other’s life.

## VII

Great was the zeal for fame, great the desire  
For the Turk’s blood that Tancred’s bosom filled,  
Who deemed he could not slake his thirst for ire,  
If by another’s hand one drop were spilled.  
Him with his shield he covered, shouting : ‘No—  
Strike not !’ to those far off. Thus safe from harms,  
At length he rescued his most mortal foe  
From his friends’ angered and victorious arms.

## VIII

They left, their shoulders turning on the town,  
And on the Christian camp, descending where  
A zigzag pathway led them gently down,  
By many a secret turn and winding ; there  
They found a narrow and umbrageous glade,  
Buried among the hills, as though it were  
A spacious theatre, on purpose made  
For bull-baiting or mimic scenes of war.

## IX

Here they both halted, and in sad suspense

Arganté turned towards the afflicted town ;

But seeing the Turk without his shield's defence,

Tancredi nobly flung away his own.

Then said : 'What thoughts oppress thee ? dost thou think

The hour is come prescribed for thee by Fate ?

If that foreseeing, thou, dismayed, dost shrink,

Thy fears are now ill-seasoned and too late.'

## X

'I think on yonder city,' he replied,

'Judæa's glorious and time-honoured Queen,

Which, conquered, falls ; while vainly I have tried

Her fate-appointed downfall to sustain.

Ev'n thy proud head, which Heaven now destines me,

To my despite is small atonement due.'

He ceased : the knights advanced most cautiously,

Since each his adversary's prowess knew.

## ■

In frame Tancredi is most lithe and light,

Quick with his hands and most swift-footed ; him

The brawny Pagan far exceeds in height,

In magnitude and massiveness of limb.

Collected, crouching, Tancred traversed round,

As if to get beneath his guard he tried,

And with his own his foeman's falchion found,

Which he strained every means to turn aside.

## XII

But bolt upright the fierce Circassian stood,  
And with like skill, but unlike manner, fought ;  
With arm stretched out far as at least he could,  
Tancredi's body, not his sword, he sought,  
Who every moment new approaches tried ;  
But he, with sword directed toward his face,  
Kept him at bay, and, menacing, denied  
Each furtive entrance and each sudden pass.

## XIII

Thus when no zephyr curls the glassy sea,  
The tempest o'er, two ships are seen to fight,  
Altho' unequal, with equality,  
Since what this gains from speed, that has in height ;  
This to the charge returns a thousand times, and veers  
From stem to stern ; unmoved, the other bides,  
And when the dwarf its giant rival nears,  
Hurls down destruction from its lofty sides.

## XIV

While to rush in again the Latin tries,  
And beat the blade that gleams before him back,  
Arganté thrusts his sword, and 'gainst his eyes  
Directs its point ; he parries the attack :  
But with such violence the Pagan aimed,  
That ere the Christian champion had recoiled,  
He struck his side, and shouted, seeing him maimed,  
' At his own game behold the fencer's foiled '

## XV

'Twixt shame and rage Tancredi was consumed,  
And cast aside all caution ; with such heat  
For quick revenge his fiery spirit fumed,  
That tardy triumph he had deemed defeat.  
His sword alone replied to that rebuke,  
Where the barred ventayle light admits : his aim  
Arganté parried ; when, with resolute look,  
'Gainst him Tancredi at half sword's length came.

## XVI

Athwart his left foot rapidly he passed,  
And with his left hand seized Arganté's right,  
And with his right hand mortally, at last,  
The right side wounded of the Pagan knight.  
'That's the foiled fencer's answer,' he replied,  
'To his triumphant master in the fray.'  
Arganté roaring, writhing, struggling, tried  
To get—but failed—his captive arm away.

## XVII

His sword, then, leaving pendent by its chain,  
From underneath, the gallant Frank he grasped ;  
Who did the same ; with all their might and main  
In mortal struggle they each other clasped.  
Alcides ne'er, upon the arid sands,  
The mighty giant with more force upheaved,  
Than that with which the rivals' nervous hands  
In various forms tenacious knots enweaved.

## XVIII

So fiercely wrestled the twined combatants,  
That both together fell upon the heath ;  
Arganté had, by management or chance,  
His right hand uppermost, his left beneath.  
But as Tancredi's sword-arm crippled lay  
Beneath the Turk's superincumbent weight,  
The risk and disadvantage seen, away  
He freed himself, and sprung upon his feet.

## XIX

Not near so quick got up the Saracen,  
Who ere he rose received a slashing blow ;  
But as its leafy head the pliant pine  
Bends and upraises to the east wind, so  
Arganté's valour more sublimely rose,  
When stricken down he again so nearly fell ;  
The desperate pair once more in combat close,  
Which, void of art, became more horrible.

## XX

Blood ran from Tancred in more spots than one,  
But from the Pagan poured almost a flood,  
Who, like a fire ill-nourished, had begun  
To feel his fury wane with loss of blood.  
Tancredi, seeing what little strength possessed  
His languid arm, as fainter grew each stroke,  
Banished all wrath from his magnanimous breast,  
Drew back some paces, and thus kindly spoke :

## XXI

‘Yield thee, undaunted man, and recognise,  
From strength or chance, thy conqueror in me :  
In thy defeat I seek no spoil, no prize,  
No right of conquest I reserve o’er thee.’  
At this the Turk, more terrible than e’er,  
His gathered fury flashing from his face,  
Exclaimed : ‘What ! vaunt to have the best, and dare  
Arganté tempt with offers of disgrace !

## XXII

‘Thy fortune use, since I from fear am free,  
And yet will thy impertinence chastise.’  
Like flickering torch that in extremity  
Revives a moment, then all splendour dies,  
So, heating with fresh ire his ebbing blood,  
He did his sinking strength invigorate ;  
His parting hour, approaching fast, he would  
With one last brilliant act commemorate.

## XXIII

Joining his left hand with its fellow right,  
He drave a blow with both conjoined in one ;  
Down fell his sword, and tho’ the Christian knight  
Opposed his own, it forced it, and passed on ;  
Thro’ shoulder, ribs, that single stroke impressed  
Full many wounds upon the cavalier.  
If Tancred feared not, his audacious breast  
Nature had made incapable of fear.



## XXIV

He then redoubled the terrific blow,  
But to the winds its force was idly spent,  
Since Tancred watching, ere it fell below,  
Sprang on one side, and balked his dread intent :  
While downwards dragged by thy unwieldy weight,  
Thou didst, Arganté, on the greensward sprawl,  
Thro' thy own act laid low, thus fortunate  
That there was none could vaunt him of thy fall.

## XXV

His open wounds the fall dilated wide,  
From them the blood in welling torrents poured ;  
He fixed his left hand on the ground, and tried,  
Raised on one knee, to use once more his sword.  
'Yield thee,' again the courteous conqueror cried,  
Nor took advantage. To this fresh appeal  
The treacherous Turk with stealthy stroke replied,  
And struck his generous rival in the heel.

## XXVI

Who, bursting forth into a fury, said :  
'Villain, is it thus my mercy you abuse ?'  
And thro' his vizor plunged and plunged his blade,  
Than which more certain way he could not choose.  
Thus died Arganté : as he lived, so died—  
Dying, he threats, nor languishes in death ;  
Made up of hate, ferocity, and pride,  
Were his last struggles and his parting breath.

## XXVII

His sword Tancredi sheathed, and reverently  
 Gave thanks to Jesus for the honour gained ;  
 But that ensanguined hard-fought victory  
 The victor's lifeblood had so nearly drained,  
 He feared his failing forces would not bear  
 The motion of the journey : still he went,  
 And step by step, with faint and feeble air,  
 His wearied course by the old pathway bent.

## XXVIII

Drag on his frame he could no more, and weak  
 And weaker grew the more he persevered ;  
 Whence down he sat upon the ground, his cheek  
 Propped by his arm, which trembling reed appeared.  
 All things before his swimming eyes whirled round,  
 Into dim shadows changed the waning light ;  
 Nor could one well distinguish, when he swooned,  
 Which was the victor, which the vanquished knight.

## XXIX

While here the lonely fight was taking place,  
 That private cause so sanguinary made,  
 Throughout the city 'gainst the impious race  
 The victors' ire its virulence displayed.  
 But who could scene so harrowing portray  
 As what the storm and sack brought forth to light ?  
 What tongue in language adequate convey  
 The awful horrors of that piteous sight ?

## XXX

Carnage had choked the town, no spot was leer,  
Corpses were piled in mounds, in masses spread ;  
There lay the wounded on the slain, and here  
The wounded buried 'neath the unburied dead.  
Their babes more closely trembling mothers squeezed,  
As with loose locks they fled in wild despair.  
The spoilers, gorged with spoil and rapine, seized  
The shrinking maidens by their flowing hair.

## XXXI

But thro' the streets that toward the highest hill  
Westward ascend, where the great temple stands,  
Horrid and wet with blood, unsated still,  
Rinaldo drove the flying Pagan bands.  
O'er their armed heads that hero whirled his sword,  
And 'mong their ranks caused massacre immense ;  
But poor protection helm and shield afford,  
Nay, want of arms is now the best defence.

## XXXII

Alone on steel his noble steel descended,  
He scorned the unarmed rabble to chastise ;  
Whom courage armed not nor arms defended,  
By dreadful voice he chased, and flashing eyes.  
There wondrous deeds of valour you might see,  
How menaced, spurned, and slew the youthful knight,  
And with unequal risk how equally  
Armed and unarmed alike he put to flight.

## XXXIII

Already a strong troop, the army's flower,  
Had with the rabble to that temple gone,  
Which, oft burnt down and oft rebuilt, still bore  
The name of its first founder, Solomon.  
On it of yore were lavished cost and skill,  
Most precious marbles, cedarn wood, and gold ;  
Now not so rich as formerly, but still,  
From towers and iron gates, a stout stronghold.

## XXXIV

Reaching this keep, to which from all around  
The crowds had fled for refuge, the great knight  
Found all its portals closely barred, and found  
Defences bristling on its lofty height.  
Casting his eyes upon the edifice,  
He twice the whole from top to bottom scanned,  
To find some narrow entrance there, and twice  
With rapid feet the pile's vast circuit spanned.

## XXXV

As plundering wolf, the honest daylight past,  
Prowls round the fold with stealthy step at night,  
Parched are whose greedy jaws, whose lengthened fast  
His innate rage and cruelty incite ;  
So looked he round some secret pass to spy  
(No matter rough or smooth), then made a halt  
In the great square ; the trembling crowds on high  
Expecting every moment the assault.

## XXXVI

(For whatsoever use or purpose kept)  
Upon one side a beam colossal lay,  
Nor did the largest vessel that e'er swept  
Liguria's coast such lofty mast display.  
This towards the massive gate the cavalier  
Moved with that arm to which all weights are light,  
And, poising it as 'twere a simple spear,  
It forward drove with all his main and might.

## XXXVII

Marble could not, nor metal, stand before  
The thundering blows, that ever grew more great ;  
The sounding hinges from the rock they tore,  
Burst the lock open, and banged down the gate.  
No battering-ram had vaunted to do more,  
No bomb, Death's bolt, had more destruction spread ;  
Thro' the opened way, like a great torrent, pour  
His troops, and follow where the victor led.

## XXXVIII

Then frightful carnage black and mournful made  
That lofty fane, which was Jehovah's erst.  
O Heaven ! how much more heavy, when delayed,  
Upon the impious do thy judgments burst.  
Thy providence aroused their wrathful mood,  
And pious hearts to cruelty constrained ;  
The impious Pagans washed now with their blood  
That temple their idolatry profaned.

## XXXIX

Meanwhile to that huge pile called David's Tower  
 Prince Solymán had gone, and there essayed,  
 Assembling the last remnant of his power,  
 The neighbouring streets to block and barricade.  
 There, too, the tyrant Aladine had gone,  
 Whom, when he saw him, Solymán addressed :  
 ' Come, famous king, come hither, and upon  
 This keep impregnable in safety rest.

## XL

' Here from the violence of hostile swords  
 Thou mayst assure thy safety and thy crown.'  
 ' Alas, alas ! ' he said, ' barbaric hordes  
 Have shaken to its base our regal town.  
 My life, and with it my dominions fall ;  
 I have lived and reigned — I live and reign no more .  
 Too truly we can say, We were—to all  
 Has come the destined day, the fatal hour.'

## XLI

Angered at that, the soldan thundered : ' Say  
 Whither, O king, is thy old valour flown ;  
 Let hostile Fate our kingdoms take away :  
 Is not still innate royalty our own ?  
 But here within from further toil repose  
 Thy wearied limbs.' Thus spoke, and bade them bring  
 (Dreading his capture by the advancing foes)  
 Within the guarded sill the aged king.

## XLII

His iron mace then grasping with both hands,  
His trusty sword replacing on his flank,  
At the dread pass the intrepid soldan stands,  
The blocked-up streets to hold against the Frank.  
Mortal were all the dreadful strokes it sped ;  
If it slew not, it levelled to the ground ;  
From the barred precincts all, despairing, fled,  
When they the frightful mace approaching found.

## XLIII

When, lo ! attended by a valorous few,  
Up came Raimondo, county of Toulouse,  
And boldly to the perilous passage flew,  
Scorning the weight of those terrific blows,  
And gave first blow ; but gave it all in vain :  
But not in vain the second smiter smote,  
Since caught his brow, upon the bloody plain  
He laid him quivering, with his arms stretched out.

## XLIV

At length that courage fear had chased away  
To the defeated Turks returned again,  
And the Frank victors were repulsed, or they  
Fell at the entrance of the fortress, slain.  
But Solymano, who among the dead  
Saw lying the half-lifeless warrior,  
Cried to his knights : ' Within the barricade  
Let him be carried, and made prisoner.'

## XLV

Forward they sprang to execute the deed,  
But the task difficult and dangerous found ;  
Since not neglectful in the hour of need,  
Raimondo's followers their fallen lord surround.  
Mad fury there, here pious duty fought ;  
Nor was the cause unworthy of the strife,  
Since these to guard his life and freedom sought,  
Those to destroy both liberty and life.

## XLVI

Still stubborn for revenge, the soldan would  
At length have crowned his efforts with success ;  
Not doubled shield or finest helmet could  
Withstand the fury of his thundering mace ;  
But that he saw the adverse forces get  
New and most powerful succour in the fight,  
Since from two opposite points together met  
The sovran captain and the peerless knight.

## XLVII

Like herd, who, seeing round him lightning play,  
And wind and thunder threaten coming rain,  
And countless clouds obscure the light of day,  
Leads back his cattle from the open plain,  
Seeking, solicitous, some sheltering nook,  
Where he may safely 'scape Heaven's wrathful blast ;  
And, guiding them by cries and with the crook,  
Urges them on, and is himself the last ;



## XLVIII

The Pagan so, when, hopeless, he beheld  
The inevitable storm, and heard the sound  
That to the heavens in horrid menace swelled,  
And saw the arms that bristled all around,  
Sent on his soldiers guarded to the tower,  
And was himself the last that persevered ;  
He left the last, so yielding to their power,  
That, altho' cautious, gallant he appeared.

## XLIX

Scarce with great travail had he shelter got  
Within the gates—they scarcely bolted were—  
When burst the bars, Rinaldo faltered not,  
But gained the threshold, nor ev'n halted there.  
Zeal to surpass him unsurpassed before,  
And his vow, led him every nerve to strain ;  
Since not forgotten was the oath he swore,  
Vengeance to wreak on him who slew the Dane.

## L

And then, ev'n then, the unconquered boy had tried  
To take, altho' impregnable, the wall ;  
Nor safe, perhaps, were Solyman inside,  
From his predestined foe ; but hark, a call !  
The captain's clarions sounded a retreat,  
And the horizon all around grew black ;  
His troops Prince Godfred bivouacked in the street,  
So as at sunrise to renew the attack.

## LI

And them addressed in joyous cheering strains :

‘Almighty God has blest His host’s career ;

The worst is over, and there now remains

Little for us to do, and nought to fear.

The tower—last anchor of the infidel

We’ll storm to-morrow, at the dawn of day ;

Meanwhile let pity, all who hear, impel

To tend with zeal the sick and maimed. Away !

## LII

‘Away ! and heal all those who have sacrificed

Their precious blood these hallowed realms to gain ;

More fitting that for cavaliers of Christ,

Than sordid gold or vengeance to obtain.

Much, too much carnage has been seen to-day,

In some too great avidity of wealth ;

Let blow the trumps, and my commands convey ;

Forbid henceforth is cruelty and stealth.’

## LIII

He ceased, and went to where Toulouse’s count,

Restored somewhat, continued still to groan.

Nor Solymano, with less hardy front,

Keeping his care concealed, addressed his own .

‘In spite of Fate, my friends, unconquered be,

While Hope is green nor fades into the sear ;

Since ’neath false terror, in reality

Our losses are much less than they appear.

## LIV

‘ The foe alone has ta’en our lowliest bands,  
The walls, and roofs ; the city is not won ;  
That is comprised in your own breasts and hands,  
And in the head that wears the royal crown.  
The king is safe with those of most renown,  
Secure defence surrounding us I see ;  
Let then vain trophies of th’ abandoned town  
The Franks retain ; repulsed at length they’ll be.

## LV

‘ Convinced I am they’ll lose at last ; besides  
That, being so vapouring in prosperity,  
They’ll turn to rapine and to homicides,  
And to unbridled sensuality.  
And, for it can’t be far, should Egypt’s host  
Come, when to such excesses they give way,  
With plunder gorged and ’mid the ruins lost,  
They to our swords will fall an easy prey.

## LVI

‘ Meanwhile with stones we can command from here  
The lofty buildings of the town below,  
And the streets leading to the Sepulchre  
Our catapults can cut off from the foe.’  
Thus, nerve infusing in their sinking hearts,  
Their hopes he freshened and their fears allayed.  
Now while such deeds were doing in these parts,  
’Mid countless armed troops Vafrino strayed.

## LVII

Selected spy against the adverse force,  
Vafrino left by the sun's setting rays,  
And nightly, unknown pilgrim, bent his course  
By most obscure and unfrequented ways.  
He passed by Ascalon before the sun  
Rose in the east ; but when the solar lamp  
Had reached mid heaven, and to decline begun,  
Before him lay the vast Egyptian camp.

## LVIII

Tents infinite, and, streaming in the breeze,  
Blue, purple, yellow standards he surveyed,  
While such a Babel of harsh languages,  
Horns, timbals, cymbals, barbarous discord brayed ;  
Such cries of camels and of elephants  
Were blent with neighs of the magnanimous horse,  
That he exclaimed : ' All Afric's habitants  
Are here transported, and all Asia's force ! '

## LIX

He first examined was the camp's site strong,  
And if by trench or outworks fortified ;  
Then went not furtive sinuous paths along,  
Nor from the passing people sought to hide,  
But thro' the imperial portals boldly sped,  
Asking and answering all, nor caused surmise ;  
Such forward brazen front accompanied  
His crafty questions and adroit replies.

## LX

Here, there, inquisitive, he bent his course,  
Thro' every street and square and tent he turned,  
Marked well the arms, the infantry, the horse,  
Their habits, names, and discipline he learned ;  
Nor yet content, to greater things aspired,  
Their secrets spied, and partly heard them ; nay,  
So deftly managed, that, as he desired,  
To the imperial tent he made his way.

## LXI

Where, looking round, he saw the canvas torn,  
Which left free passage for the voice to come ;  
And as it faced it, every sound was borne  
From the recesses of the king's own room,  
Whose secrets thus were ill-concealed from one  
Who, watchful, listened at the outside ; there  
Vafrino watched, as if intent alone  
The tent's dissevered canvas to repair.

## LXII

A purple cloak the belted captain wore,  
And stood bare-headed in the lofty tent ;  
His helm and shield two youthful pages bore,  
He held a spear on which he somewhat leant.  
Gazing he was on one of giant frame  
And look most sinister, who waited near.  
Vafrino, listening, heard Prince Godfred's name  
Pronounced, and, thunderstruck, pricked up his ear.

## LXIII

The chief was saying, 'Art thou certain then  
Godfred to kill?' He answered him, 'Signor,  
Certain I am, and to thy court again  
Swear to return not, save as conqueror;  
Those who conspire with me I will forestall,  
Nor other guerdon ask for, save it be,  
His arms to hang up on Alcairo's wall,  
With these few lines subscribed in memory :

## LXIV

"From the Frank captain, Asia's plunderer,  
These arms in battle Ormond took, when he  
His life-blood took, and has suspended here,  
That such remembrance should immortal be."'  
'Ne'er will our gracious liege a deed so grand  
Unhonoured leave,' the chief supreme replied :  
'He not alone will grant thy just demand,  
But give thee ample recompense beside.

## LXV

'Now, then, the counterfeited arms prepare,  
'For, lo ! the day of battle draweth nigh.'  
'Ready, O prince,' he answered him, 'they are.'  
Thus ended parle, nor did the chief reply.  
At these broad hints of danger imminent,  
Vafrino paused in agony of doubt ;  
Pondering what was the secret plot, what meant  
Counterfeit arms ; and could make nothing out.

## LXVI

Whence he departed, and remained the whole  
Long night awake, nor would his eyelids close :  
But when the camp had every banderol  
Spread to the matin breezes, he arose,  
And with the other troops in consort went ;  
And when they halted, halted, and again,  
Restless, impatient, roved from tent to tent,  
To glean some news that might the facts explain.

## LXVII

And found, while searching, on a pompous throne,  
Armida, girt by maids and knights ; apart,  
The enchantress sat, dejected and alone,  
And seemed to commune with her own sad heart.  
On her fair hands reposed her cheek ; she kept  
Fixed on the ground those amorous stars, her eyes ;  
Nor could he say for certain if they wept,  
But in them teeming pearls could recognise.

## LXVIII

In front of her sat fierce Adrastus, who  
Seemed not to breathe, or ev'n his eyelids move ;  
As on her, motionless, he seemed to glue  
His hungry eyes, and feed his passionate love.  
But Tisapherne, as him or her he scanned,  
With anger kindled or with passion burned,  
As envy on one, and love on the other hand,  
Now pale, now red, his changing features turned.

## LXIX

Then saw Prince Altamore ; he stood apart,  
Amid a bevy of fair girls, and rolled  
His eager glances with discretionate art,  
And by strong effort his desire controlled.  
Now on her hand, now on her lovely face,  
Now on more guarded charms his vision rests ;  
Now penetrates to where the truant lace  
A secret path discloses 'tween her breasts.

## LXX

At length Armida lifts her eyes, awhile  
Soft and serene her beauteous brow appears,  
And of a sudden a celestial smile  
Breaks out, and flashes through a cloud of tears.  
Sir knights,' she said, 'remembrance of your vaunt  
Doth much the anguish of my soul assuage ;  
For vengeance quick and summary I pant,  
And with revenge in prospect, sweet is rage.'

## LXXI

'Ah, for God's sake,' the Indian chieftain said,  
'Clear thy sad brow, and grieve not, I entreat ;  
Soon shalt thou see the execrable head  
Of that Rinaldo rolling at thy feet,  
Or this avenging hand shall drag him here,  
Captive to thee.' Thus promised on his part:  
Listening to which, the other cavalier  
Spoke not, tho' almost bursting in his heart.



## LXXII

Then turning to Prince Tisapherne, she cried,  
With a sweet smile : 'What sayest thou, signor ?'  
He with derisive raillery replied :  
'I will discreetly follow from afar,  
As I am backward, yon dare-devil knight ;'  
And deeply stung the Indian by his sneer,  
Who took him up : 'Most meet it is and right  
That thou shouldst follow, and the ordeal fear.'

## LXXIII

His haught head tossing, Tisaphernes cried :  
'Ah, were I master of my will, proud peer,  
And could this falchion use, 'twould soon decide  
Which of us twain most backward would appear.  
Thee or thy vaunts I fear not to oppose ;  
'Tis Heaven alone and hostile love are feared.'  
He ceased : to challenge him Adrastus rose,  
But 'twixt them fair Armida interfered.

## LXXIV

'Ah, why that gift so often given me, would  
Ye, gallant knights,' she whispered, 'take away ?  
Ye are my champions, and that title should  
Alone suffice your quarrels to allay.  
I am the offended one in your offence ;  
This ye well know.' Thus to the rivals spoke,  
According by her gentle influence  
Discordant spirits 'neath an iron yoke.

## LXXV

Vafrino, present, heard the whole, and thence  
The truth surmising, took himself away ;  
Of the dark plot he had some evidence,  
But found that all in deep involvement lay.  
Still, still he enquired ; the obstacles alone  
Increased his wish the mystery to track ;  
His life he was determined to lay down,  
Or bring the important hidden secret back.

## LXXVI

Countless, unheard of schemes his subtile brain  
Formed, nor a single trick or fraud forgot ;  
Still with all that, he could no knowledge gain  
Of the arms and plan of the mysterious plot.  
Fortune at length (which he had failed to do)  
The knot of his perplexities unwound ;  
Whence to those snares, 'gainst Godfred set, the clue,  
In one entire unbroken chain, he found.

## LXXVII

Returned Vafrino had to where still sat,  
Amid her champion knights, the lover-foe ;  
For there he deemed it best to investigate,  
Where such great crowds were passing to and fro.  
Here, then, a Pagan damsel he addressed  
As an old friend he previously had known,  
And former friendship's privilege possessed ;  
Familiar and fair spoken was his tone.

## LXXVIII

‘Fain would I, too,’ by way of jest, he said,  
‘Become the champion of some fair. I feel  
Sure I could Bouillon’s or Rinaldo’s head  
Rive with one sweep of my avenging steel  
But ask, and I will bring you, if you please,  
One of yon barbarous barons’ heads.’ Thus spoke,  
By way of prelude, meaning, by degrees,  
To more important ends to bring the joke.

## LXXIX

But as he spoke he smiled, and smiling made  
A certain gesture, to him natural ;  
When at that moment, lo ! another maid  
Heard, saw, came up, and said to him : ‘From all  
The rest I intend to carry off thy heart ;  
Nor needest thou unworthy service fear ;  
Thee I elect my champion, and apart  
Converse would with thee as my cavalier.’

## LXXX

Aside she drew, and said to him : ‘Thou art  
Found out, Vafrino ; thou shouldst know me, too.’  
The crafty squire was troubled sore at heart,  
But turned to her again, and smiled anew.  
‘Thee, who, once seen, could ne’er from memory fade,  
I ne’er before have seen, that I am aware ;  
I only know far different, lovely maid,  
From what thou call’st me, is the name I bear.

## LXXXI

- ‘ Me on Biserta’s slope Lesbin begot ;  
My name’s Almanzor.’ ‘ Tuscan,’ she replied,  
‘ Well, well I know thy person, and need not  
Guess at what thou wouldst strive in vain to hide.  
For I am thy friend, Vafrino, and would fling  
My life away thine or thy lord’s to save :  
Erminia I, erst daughter of a king,  
Tancredi’s captive, and thy fellow slave.

## LXXXII

- ‘ Two happy months, in welcome prison, thou  
Stood’st guard o’er me, compassionate sentinel,  
Nor fail’dst all kindly courtesies to show :  
The same—the same I am—regard me well.’  
The squire, who on her face had fixed his eyes,  
Not tardy was to recognise the fair.  
‘ Safe is thy life,’ she added ; ‘ by yon skies,  
By God’s own image in yon sun, I swear.

## LXXXIII

- Nay, thee I beg, when thou returnest, me  
To reconduct to my dear bonds. Alas !  
Here in unwelcome bitter liberty  
Most gloomy days and troubled nights I pass ;  
And if, perchance, thou comest here as spy,  
Thy stars have led thee to a chance most rare ;  
Unfold I can the foul conspiracy,  
With all that had been hard to learn elsewhere.’

## LXXXIV

Her, as she spoke, all silently he eyed,  
Nor false Armida's treachery forgot ;  
What fools are men in women to confide—  
False blabbing things—they will, and they will not.  
Such his reflections were. At length he said :  
' If such thy pleasure be, thy steps I'll guide ;  
Let this between us be established,  
And further talk to better use applied.'

## LXXXV

They orders give to be in saddle ere  
The encampment for its morning march parade.  
Vafrino left the tent, returned the fair  
Back to her friends, where she a while delayed,  
And feigned, while speaking of her new-found knight,  
To jest and banter ; then went forth again :  
Went to the trysting place to join his flight,  
And from the camp both sallied to the plain.

## LXXXVI

At a sequestered spot they had arrived,  
And lost sight of the encampment, when he said :  
' Tell me how those barbarians have contrived  
For Godfred's life their subtle snares to spread.'  
At his demand Erminia, bit by bit,  
The web and woof of the foul plot unwound :  
' Eight princely warriors are engaged in it,  
Of whom Ormond the strong is most renowned.

## LXXXVII

‘ These have conspired (or moved by wrath or hate),  
And these the means they intend to use : the day  
On which the two great armies vindicate  
Their claim to Asia in pitched battle, they  
Upon their arms the red cross sign will wear,  
And, armed like Franks, commingle in the fight ;  
And as Prince Godfred’s guards accoutred are,  
So will their vestments be of gold and white.

## LXXXVIII

‘ But on his helmet each will wear a token,  
That by his friends he may as friend be known.  
And when the two great armies’ ranks are broken,  
And all things are in dire confusion thrown,  
They’ll seek him out, and trap the valorous heart,  
’Neath his guards’ friendly colours and device ;  
Poisoned their swords are with infernal art,  
So that one scratch will for his death suffice.

## LXXXIX

‘ And as the Pagans failed not to surmise  
That I your surcoats and equipments knew,  
The false devices they made me devise ;  
I was compelled the hateful work to do.  
This is the reason why their harsh request  
I fly, and leave the camp to roam abroad ;  
No matter what the mode be, I detest  
To taint myself by any act of fraud.

## XC

‘These are my reasons—but not these alone.’

Here she stopped short, and, hanging down her head,  
Scarlet became, as if ashamed to own

Her closing words, half wishing them unsaid.  
The squire, who felt desirous to extract

What she from shame seemed ill-disposed to grant,  
Exclaimed : ‘ Of little faith, why hide the exact  
And real causes from thy confidant ?’

## XCI

A deep-drawn sigh from her wrung bosom came,

And these hoarse feverish accents reached his ear :

‘ Ill-timed reserve ! ill-kept, ill-guarded shame !

Henceforth begone—you are unsuited here.

Why struggle more ? or, vainly bashful, try

To hide Love’s fire beneath your specious flame ?

Due such regards as these were formerly,

Not now that I an errant damsel am.’

## XCII

Then said : ‘ That night, so fatal unto me,

And to my realm, which forced was to submit,

More than appeared I lost ; my misery

Was not in, no, but was derived from it.

Light is the loss of empire, but, alas !

Myself I lost, together with my throne,

Past all recovery : for I conscious was

That mind, heart, sense, insensate, all had gone.

## XCIII

• Thou know'st, Vafrino, then, how, all alarmed,  
I, seeing around such desolation spread,  
Ran to thy lord and mine, whom, fully armed,  
I for the first time saw my palace tread ;  
And how, low bending, I poured forth this prayer :  
“ Unconquered victor, mercy, pity show,  
Not for my life I pray thee, but ah ! spare  
The maiden honour of thy suppliant foe.”

## XCIV

• And how he gave his loyal hand to me,  
Nor waited for me to complete my prayer,  
Exclaiming : “ I will thy defender be,  
Nor vain is thy appeal, O maiden fair.”  
’Twas then a vague but sweet emotion stole  
Down to my heart, and piercing it became,  
As it crept onward to my stricken soul,  
A mortal wound, a fierce consuming flame.

## XCV

• He visited me oft, and in sweet strain,  
My dole condoling, sympathised with me ;  
Nor of my spoils would any part retain,  
But said : “ Full freedom I give back to thee.”  
A gift that seemed which was, alas ! a theft,  
• Since from myself he stole me ; and the part  
He did restore I prized not ; but he reft  
From me, by force, the empire of my heart.



## XCVI

‘ Love ill conceals itself : often of thee  
Did I, desirous, of my lord enquire ;  
Thou, seeing the signs of my infirmity,  
Didst answer me : “ Thou burnest with love’s fire,”  
Which I denied : but ah ! my passionate sighs  
Of my heart’s state far truer witness bore ;  
And, tho’ my tongue was mute, my tell-tale eyes  
Betrayed the fire that burned me to the core.

## XCVII

‘ Unfortunate silence ! would that I had then  
Demanded medicine for my suffering state,  
Since driven afterwards to give such rein  
To my desires, when useless and too late.  
In short, I left, concealing the wild strife  
That raged within my heart, and thought to die.  
Seeking at last some solace for my life,  
Love burst the barrier of all modesty.

## XCVIII

‘ So that in quest of my dear lord I went,  
That he might cure the wound himself had made ;  
But on the way met fierce impediment,  
Being by a band of lawless loons waylaid ;  
Into whose hands a prey I nearly fell,  
But ’scaped into a distant wilderness,  
And there abode in solitary cell,  
Inhabitant of woods, and shepherdess.

## XCIX

‘ But in me when that longing had revived,  
Which for a time by terror was repressed,  
I left ; and when at the same spot arrived,  
Me did again the same mishap arrest.  
Nor could I fly ; this time the robber band  
Pursued too swiftly, and was now too near.  
Thus was I captured : from far Egypt’s land,  
And unto Gaza bound, my captors were.

## C

‘ Me to their captain as their prize they led,  
Whom with account so plausible I gained,  
That both respected and unviolated  
I was, while with Armida I remained.  
Thus many times a captive I became,  
Thus oft escaped ; such my adventures are.  
Still, tho’ enslaved and freed so oft, the same  
First chains that bound, still keep me prisoner.

## CI

‘ And oh ! may he, who has around my heart  
Wound such indissoluble ties, not say,  
Seek, errant maid, some other home ; thou art  
Not worthy ’neath Tancredi’s roof to stay.  
But may he welcome my return ; ah ! may  
He let me in my former jail abide.’  
Thus spake Erminia, and thus night and day  
The pair rode on, conversing side by side.

## CII

Vafrino left the high road now, and sought  
Either a shorter or securer way,  
Which their steps nearly to the city brought,  
As from the westering sun the east grew gray ;  
When, lo ! black blood-gouts they began to trace ;  
Begrimed with blood, then found a warrior dead,  
Who blocked the path up, and whose monster face  
Heavenward was turned, and, dead, still menacèd.

## CIII

The fashion of his arms and strange array  
Proved him a Pagan, so the squire passed on,  
When, at some distance off, another lay,  
Whom, when Vafrino cast his eyes upon,  
He thought this surely must a Christian be,  
And the dark armour more confirmed his doubt ;  
Whence springing down to see his face, ' Ah me !  
Tancredi's slain ! ' he wildly shouted out.

## CIV

X To look at the grim Saracen had stayed  
The unfortunate princess, when, like a dart,  
The ringing, piercing accents, that betrayed  
Vafrino's agony, transfix'd her heart.  
At Tancred's name she galloped madly there,  
Like one with wine or sudden frenzy flown ;  
And seeing that face all colourless and fair,  
Vaulted not—no, but from her selle dashed down :

## CV

And tears in torrents inexhaustible  
    (Her words with sobs commingling) o'er him shed.  
' Ah, sight appalling and most horrible,  
    At what a moment am I hither led ?  
I see thee, Tancred, stretched upon the ground,  
    And yet my presence thy closed eyes ignore ;  
After long absence thou art no sooner found,  
    Than lost again, alas ! for evermore.

## CVI

' Ne'er had I deemed that thou couldst ever be  
    Unsightly, darling, in my loving sight ;  
Yet now I would welcome blindness, not to see  
    Thy mangled form, beloved, ill-fated knight !  
I dare not look. Of those dear, guilty eyes  
    Where is the fire—ah, where the lustre now ?  
Where of those blooming cheeks the damask dyes,  
    Where the calm sunshine of that noble brow ?

## CVII

' No matter, lovely soul, if thou survive  
    Within yon dark and squalid form, which still  
Is dear as ever ; hear, and ah, forgive  
    The theft and daring of my longing will,  
As from these pallid lips cold kisses I  
    Snatch, which I fondly hoped had been more warm :  
From Death some portion of his victory  
    I'll wrest, in kissing this inanimate form.

## CVIII

‘Compassionate mouth, whose kindly eloquence  
Was, living, wont to cheer my cheerless dole,  
Grant that I may, ere my departure hence,  
Myself at least with one dear kiss console !  
Then had I dared to ask, it may be thou  
Hadst given what I now steal ; ah, then, before  
I die, let me embrace thee once, and now  
Within thy lips my sinking spirit pour.

## CIX

‘Receive my fluttering soul, which is resolved  
To follow thine ; and ah, direct it where  
Thou goest !’ Thus spoke, and thro’ her eyes dissolved,  
So that a river seemed the weeping fair.  
Bathed by her quickening tears, the knight came to,  
And oped his lips, tho’ still were closed his eyes ;  
He oped his lips and breathed, as in adieu,  
One sob, responsive to the maiden’s sighs.

## CX

A gleam of hope, as thus the warrior sighed,  
Erminia’s bosom for a moment cheers ;  
‘Ah, ope thine eyes for these last rites,’ she cried,  
‘Which I perform, Tancredi, with my tears.  
Look at me well, for I would near thee die ;  
Death in thy company indeed were bliss.  
Look at me well, nor ah, so fleetly fly :  
The dying favour I demand is this.’

## CXI

His eyes Tancredi oped, and heavily  
Closed them again ; again her cries found vent,  
When the squire said : ‘ Not yet extinct is he ;  
Cure him then first, and afterwards lament.’  
Then stripped him of his arms ; with delicate touch  
Her trembling fingers their assistance add ;  
His wounds she examined, and, being skilled in such,  
Thence certain hope of his recovery had.

## CXII

She saw from weakness that his ill arose,  
From loss of blood, in too great plenty shed ;  
Nor had about her but a veil to close  
His wounds, in parts so uninhabited.  
But her new-fashioned bandages Love found,  
And taught new arts of pity ; where he bled  
She with her tresses staunched the blood, and bound  
His wounds with locks dissevered from her head.

## CXIII

And tho’ her scant and delicate veil did not  
Suffice to bind his numerous wounds, nor grew  
Or dittany or saffron in that spot,  
Still many a charm she for such purpose knew ;  
So that he shook off, thro’ her witching aid,  
His death-like sleep, and raised his vacant eyes ;  
He saw his squire and the compassionate maid  
Impending o’er him, robed in pilgrim guise.

## CXIV

‘How com’st thou here, and whence, Vafrin?’ he cried;  
‘And who, my kind compassionate nurse, art thou?’  
‘Twixt doubt and happiness, Erminia sighed,  
While mantling blushes dyed her lovely brow.  
‘All in good time thou’lt know,’ replied the fair;  
‘Silence meanwhile thy nurse prescribes, and rest;  
Thou shalt be healed—the recompense prepare.’  
His drooping head then pillowed on her breast.

## CXV

Vafrino pondered how ’twere best to bear  
Him to his tent ere the evening darker grew,  
When, lo! arrived a troop of horsemen there,  
That were Tancredi’s followers, he knew.  
With him they were when he Arganté met,  
And to appeal of arms defied him. They  
Then followed not, for that he would not let,  
But sought him now, alarmed at his delay.

## CXVI

Many besides had the same search pursued,  
But these alone, it happed, the mark had hit;  
And with their arms now wove a seat, tho’ rude,  
Propped up on which, the wounded knight could sit  
Then seeing they left Arganté, Tancred said:  
‘What! to the crows my doughty rival doom?  
For God’s sake leave not thus the valorous dead,  
Or him defraud of glory and a tomb!’

## CXVII

‘No strife have I with yon mute mass of clay ;  
He died as die the brave, whence, comrades, you  
Should to his corpse those fitting honours pay,  
The only ones that after death are due.’  
Then, with the assistance that his troop supplied,  
He made them his illustrious foeman bring.  
Vafrino kept at fair Erminia’s side,  
Like one who guards a closely-guarded thing.

## CXVIII

The prince then added : ‘Not unto my tent,  
But to Jerusalem, my body bear ;  
For, if frail life succumb to accident  
Of mortal kind, I would it happened there ;  
As there it was the Man Immortal died,  
There easier were the road to heaven, and now  
Were my one pious purpose satisfied,  
To have performed, tho’ ev’n in death, my vow.

## CXIX

He said, and thither carried was, and laid  
On a soft couch : then sank in calm repose.  
A lone secluded dwelling for the maid,  
And not far distant off, Vafrino chose :  
Then to seek audience of Prince Godfred went,  
And entered in, there being no hindrance made,  
Tho’ at the time on future plans intent,  
He in a balance many a counsel weighed.



## CXX

*Rest*

At the bedside where his enfeebled frame  
Raymond reposed, the pious captain sat,  
And there his counsellors of greatest fame  
Around him formed a noble coronet.  
Now, while to him his speech addressed the squire,  
Of other things none questioned or replied :  
' I went according to thy orders, sire,  
And have the infidel encampment spied.

## CXXI

' But think not I am able to recount  
The unnumbered numbers of that motley host.  
All trace of plain, of valley, and of mount  
Was in the passing of their legions lost ;  
Where came, or ev'n approached, their hordes accurst,  
Bare grew the earth, the founts and rivers dry :  
Not all Judæa's waters could their thirst,  
Their hunger not her harvests satisfy.

## CXXII

' But, for the most part, their unwieldy hands,  
Both horse and foot, of no effience are ;  
They give no heed to signals or commands,  
Nor draw the sword, and only strike from far :  
But there are some of bravery and skill,  
Whom Persia's princes 'neath their standards bring ;  
Nay, there's one squadron better, choicer still,  
Styled the immortal squadron of the king.

## CXXIII

‘ Immortal styled, for ev’n defect of one  
Never occurs ; whene’er a member dies,  
Another’s chosen next him in renown,  
Who in succession the void place supplies.  
Equalled in sense or strength by few or none,  
Is the camp’s captain, Emireno hight ;  
Him the king charged has to leave nought undone  
Thee to a general action to incite.

## CXXIV

‘ Nor do I think the army will retard  
Its coming here beyond the second day.  
Take care, Rinaldo, then, thy head to guard,  
For which all such avidity display ;  
’Gainst it the most famed warriors are opposed,  
With sword and anger sharpened for the attack,  
Since her fair self Armida has proposed  
In guerdon to the knight that brings it back.

## CXXV

‘ The valorous princely Persian, Altamore,  
Monarch of Samarcand, among them vies ;  
Adrastus, too, the giant king, whose power  
Towards the far confines of Aurora lies,  
One so diverse from all mankind, that he  
An elephant bestrideth for his steed ;  
And Tisaphernes, to whose chivalry  
Concordant fame awards the highest meed.’

## CXXVI

As thus he spoke, Rinaldo's face all o'er  
Sparkled, his eyes flashed fire, and every vein  
Swelled, as he burned to meet the foe once more,  
Nor could contain himself, or calm remain.  
Vafrino then : ' In what I have premised,  
But little, worthy captain, is revealed ;  
In this, the main part of the whole's comprised :  
The arms of Judas against thee they wield.'

## CXXVII

Then, bit by bit, explained in terms precise  
The treacherous stratagems for him prepared :  
The poisoned arms, the counterfeit device,  
The vaunts he heard, the promise, the reward ;  
Much to their many questions he replied,  
When, a brief pause occurring, his bold brow  
The captain raising, to Raimondo cried :  
' Sage counsellor, what counsel offerest thou ? '

## CXXVIII

' I would not, as we had agreed, begin  
The assault,' he answered, ' at the dawn of day,  
But so invest the tower, that those within  
Will not be able to escape away ;  
And let the camp repose, so that restored  
It be, meanwhile, for more decisive fray.  
Determine thou, were't better use the sword  
With open force, or that in wait it lay ? '

## CXXIX

‘ But, in my judgment, it behoves thee most  
Thyself to care for beyond every care ;  
Since thro’ thee conquers, thro’ thee reigns the host ;  
And who would guide it were not Godfred there ?  
And, that the traitors’ arms be not concealed,  
Command thy gallant guard to alter theirs ;  
The fraud will thus be unto thee revealed  
By the same villains that have laid the snares.’

## CXXX

‘ Thou dost, as ever,’ the bold chief replied,  
‘ A friendly will and sage discretion show ;  
But what is doubtful let us now decide,  
And march at once against the impious foe :  
The Orient’s victors should not mewed up be  
Behind stone walls, or in dark trenches fight ;  
No—let the infidel our valour see  
In the open field, in the most open light.

## CXXXI

‘ In part by prestige of the name dismayed,  
They’ll not withstand the victor’s haughty face,  
Much less his arms ; whence firmly shall be laid  
Upon their overthrow our empire’s base.  
The tower will soon surrender, if bereft  
Of outward aid, or we can storm the keep.’  
Here ceased the noble paladin, and left,  
Since the stars, sinking, wooed the world to sleep.



## CANTO XX.

### I

ALREADY the tenth hour had passed ; their works,  
Waked by the sun, mankind had now resumed,  
When, from the summit of the tower, the Turks  
Afar saw something shadowy, that loomed  
Like cloud at falling eve. At length they knew  
That 'twas the friendly host, beneath whose tread  
To heaven the dust in murky volumes flew,  
And o'er the plains and neighbouring mountains spread.

### II

Then from the lofty summit to the sky  
Raised up their voices the beleaguered host,  
With noise resembling Thracian herons' cry  
When their nests quitting at the approach of frost,  
Which, screaming, fly the freezing blast before,  
In countless flocks, in search of warmer lands.  
Their fallen hopes, thence revived, restore  
Gibes to their tongues and arrows to their hands.

## III

Quickly the Frank besiegers knew from whence  
Their threats proceed, and that new burst of ire,  
And, looking from a lofty eminence,  
Beheld the Egyptian armament entire.  
At once their breasts a generous warmth inflamed,  
All burned with ardour to begin the fray ;  
'Give us the signal, peerless chief!' exclaimed  
The haughty youth, impatient of delay.

## IV

But he refused to lead them on before  
The morrow's dawn, and curbed each fiery knight ;  
To test the foeman's mettle he forbore,  
Nor would engage in desultory fight.  
'Twere better, after such fatigue,' he cried,  
'One day, at least, we gave up to repose.'  
Vain confidence, it may be, that he tried  
Of their own strength to foster in his foes.

## V

The Christians failed not all things to prepare,  
And burned expectant for the dawn's first ray ;  
The sky was never so serene and fair  
As on that ever-memorable day.  
Jocund Aurora smiled, and infinite  
Sunbeams appeared to bathe its birth in gold ;  
While, past all wont, Heaven magnified its light,  
Their deeds in unveiled splendour to behold.

## VI

Soon as he saw the golden morning shine,  
His marshalled army forth Prince Godfred led ;  
But, as a guard around King Aladine,  
He placed the Christians who from Lebanon fled,  
And had themselves on his protection thrown,  
And with them made Count Raymond duty do ;  
Nor trusted them, tho' large their force alone,  
But left a troop of gallant Gascons too.

## VII

So looked, as forth he rode, the sovran chief,  
That all on certain victory presumed ;  
Grand and august he was, past all belief,  
As with new favour Heaven his face illumed.  
With honour flushed his manly features were ;  
There youth brought back its bloom and purple light ;  
So shone his eyes, so noble was his air,  
That more than mortal seemed the pious knight.

## VIII

Nor had he far proceeded, when in front  
The encamped Egyptian army he descried,  
And on arriving seized a little mount  
That cover to his left and rear supplied.  
In shallow wings and front extended, he  
Towards the plain country then deployed his ranks ;  
In the centre crowded all his infantry,  
And winged with wings of cavalry both flanks.

## III

The left, that on the rising ground reclined,  
Which did a natural defence oppose,  
To the two princes Robert he assigned,  
And for the centre his own brother chose.  
The right he held himself, where the open plain  
Involved most risk, by nature of the ground ;  
There, by a dash, the foe might not in vain  
Hope his less numerous forces to surround.

## X

Here his own Lorrainers, and here he fixed  
The best armed and the choicest of his force ;  
And 'mid horse archers light foot intermixed,  
That were accustomed to engage 'mid horse.  
The Adventurers, then, and many a chosen knight  
He formed together in a separate band,  
As a reserve upon the army's right,  
And o'er them placed Rinaldo in command.

## XI

To whom the chief : ' To thee, upon this field,  
We look for triumph and momentous things ;  
Keep thou thy squadron in reserve, concealed  
Behind the cover of these spacious wings ;  
And when the foe draws near, his flank assail,  
Thwart his intentions, and his ranks disperse ;  
He, if my judgment err not, will not fail,  
Wheeling, to try and take us in reverse.'



## XII

From rank to rank, his bounding steed upon,  
From horse to foot, then, Godfred seemed to fly ;  
Thro' the barred ventayle his flushed features shone,  
And lightnings shot forth from his flashing eye.  
The hopeful he confirms, the doubtful cheers,  
Recalls to mind their vauntings to the bold,  
And to the brave past proofs ; some cavaliers  
He wins by hopes of honour, some of gold.

## XIII

Then on a height he halted, where his first  
And noblest troops were posted, and from thence  
Into a flood of such rapt language burst,  
That all entranced were by its eloquence.  
As snow-drifts, loosened by the genial south,  
O'er Alpine peaks rush down in torrents, so  
Rapid and voluble, from Godfred's mouth,  
Melted by zeal, the tuneful periods flow.

## XIV

'Scourge of Christ's foes, my gallant camp, my bold,  
Intrepid victors of the Orient, lo !  
Come is the final fatal day. Behold !  
The longed for moment is before you now.  
Nor without deep design doth Heaven consent  
That in one host is joined the Pagan power.  
Together here are all your foemen pent,  
That many wars ye end in one brief hour.

## XV

‘ We'll many victories concentrate in one,  
In which not more fatigue or risk there will be ;  
Let there, then, none be, bold crusaders, none  
Alarmed a host so numerous to see.  
Ill can such jarring elements unite,  
Or you, confused by opposite orders, face ;  
Small will the number be of those that fight :  
Some will want heart, and some sufficient space.

## XVI

‘ Those who will front us are mere savages,  
Who, for the most part, without strength or skill,  
From servile calling or ignoble ease  
Are hither dragged to fight against their will.  
Their swords and shields I see wave to and fro,  
Their ensigns tremble, tho' no wind there be ;  
Their wavering movements, faltering sounds I know,  
And by sure signs their certain doom foresee.

## XVII

‘ Yon chief, with gold and purple glittering o'er,  
Who looks so fierce and has supreme command,  
May have subdued the Arab or the Moor,  
Yet not be able against us to stand.  
What, when all is in wild confusion thrown,  
Can he, however sage or gallant, do ?  
His troops he knows not, nor by them is known,  
And “there I was, there thou,” can say to few.

## XVIII

‘But I am captain of a chosen host ;  
Together we have fought, together won ;  
And since, to have commanded you I boast,  
To me, whose land or lineage is unknown ?  
Know I not every sword and every lance,  
Ev’n while it trembles pendent in the air ?  
Can I not tell if Ireland or if France,  
Nay, ev’n whose arm impelled the stroke, declare ?

## XIX

‘I ask for nothing new ; let me but find  
Each show that zeal which formerly he showed,  
Each prove himself the same, and bear in mind  
His honour, mine, and the honour of his God.  
Away ! cut down the infidel—away !  
And through their deaths secure your sacred prize.  
But why wait more, or your advance delay ?  
Ye have won—I read your triumph in your eyes.’

## XX

From heaven a crystalline translucent light  
Seemed to descend, as thus the captain spake ;  
So, from her mantle, a midsummer night  
Is wont sheet-lightning or a star to shake ;  
But this, one might imagine, was sent down  
From the sun’s inmost core, and there were some  
(As round his head it played and formed a crown)  
Deemed it a symbol of his reign to come.

## XXI

It may be that, if man's presumptuous tongue  
Dare pierce the mystery of celestial things,  
A guardian angel from Heaven's choir had flung  
Round him the sheen of his seraphic wings.  
While thus the pious Christian cavalier  
The Franks addressed, and issued his commands,  
Not backward was Prince Emiren to cheer,  
And orders give to the Egyptian bands.

## XXII

His numerous troops he ranged in order, soon  
As he caught sight of the approaching Franks,  
And likewise formed his force in a half-moon,  
Foot in the centre, horse upon the flanks.  
The right in person he resolved to head ;  
Charge of the left on Altamore bestowed ;  
The foot, between them, Muleasses led,  
And in the centre fair Armida rode.

## XXIII

The Indian monarch and the imperial train  
With Tisapherne were on the captain's right ;  
But, where the left wing o'er the spacious plain  
Could in more free and open order fight,  
With Altamoro, Libya's, Persia's kings,  
And the two chieftains of the desert were ;  
And cross-bowmen, with those that whirled the slings,  
And shafts discharged, were concentrated there.

## XXIV

Thus marshalled, Emireno dashed his spurs  
Into his steed, and galloped down the ranks ;  
Now spoke himself, now thro' interpreters,  
Mingling rewards with threats, rebukes with thanks.  
To some he said : ' Why such dejection show ?  
What, soldiers, you, and yet betray such fright ?  
Why, what can one against a hundred do ?  
Your shouts, your shadows should put them to flight.'

## XXV

To others : ' Go, belie not your bold look,  
And from the foe their lawless plunder wrest.'  
In some, the harrowing imagery woke,  
And in their minds it moulded and impressed,  
Of their imploring country, and the dread  
Felt by their suppliant and affrighted young.  
' Fancy your country now unfolds,' he said,  
' These plaints, these supplications, thro' my tongue :

## XXVI

' My laws preserve, and in this fatal hour  
Let not my blood our sacred temples lave ;  
Our virgins from pollution of the Giaour,  
The tombs and ashes of our fathers, save.  
To you, lamenting happy times, now fled,  
The afflicted elders show their silver hair ;  
Matrons to you their babes and marriage bed,  
Their little cradles, and their bosoms bare.

## XXVII

'Asia,' to many he exclaimed, 'selects  
You as the champions of her fame ; from you  
On yon barbaric robbers she expects  
Vengeance most bitter, but most justly due.'  
Thus varied natures to his point he gained,  
By varied speeches, and by varied mien ;  
But now the captains ceased, for there remained  
But little space the rival hosts between.

## XXVIII

Oh ! 'twas a grand and wondrous sight to see,  
How, with their ranks deployed, the camps at last  
Fronted each other in dread rivalry,  
Ready to move at the first signal blast.  
Spread to the breeze, the banners waved on high,  
Plumes gaily danced the towering helms upon ;  
And arms, crests, colours, and embroidery,  
All steel and gold, flashed brightly in the sun.

## XXIX

Appearance of a thick-set wood suggest  
The two great camps—so thick the spears abound.  
Bent are the bows, the lances placed in rest,  
The arrows vibrate, and the slings whirl round ;  
The destriers, too, beneath their riders bound,  
And seem to second their infuriate ire ;  
They stamp, snort, neigh, and restless paw the ground,  
And their swoln nostrils breathe forth smoke and fire.

## XXX

Fair is ev'n horror in so fair a sight,  
And from the midst of fear enjoyment springs ;  
Inspiring no less terror than delight,  
The horrible, harmonious trumpet rings.  
Still, the Frank camp, tho' less in number, seems  
More splendid to the eye and to the ear :  
With greater brilliancy its armour gleams,  
Its trumpets' notes more warlike are and clear.

## XXXI

The Christian clarions the first challenge gave,  
The Pagans' answer and defiance sound ;  
The Franks kneel down, no less devout than brave,  
And, rapt with reverence, kiss the hallowed ground.  
The space between decreases, disappears ;  
The foe on each side charge their charging foes ;  
Upon the wings engage the cavaliers ;  
The line advances, cross and crescent close.

## XXXII

But who, of all the Christians in that fight,  
Gave the first blow, and worthy honour gained ?  
'Twas thou, Gildippe, wast the first to smite  
The great Hyrcanus that in Ormus reigned ;  
And (for such glory to a woman's blow  
The heavens conceded) pierced his brawny breast ;  
Transfixed, he fell, and, falling, heard the foe  
With cheers her more than woman's skill attest.

## XXXIII

The warrior woman having snapt her spear,  
With virile arm her trusty sabre drew,  
And 'gainst the Persians urged her destrier,  
And charged and broke their densest columns thro';  
Zopirus, where man girds himself, she smote,  
(Almost asunder by her sword-cut hewed),  
Then clave, Alarco striking in the throat,  
The double passage of the voice and food.

## XXXIV

A thrust Argeo, and a downright blow,  
Prince Artaxerxes felled, one stunned, one slain ;  
She next, the left wrist of Ismael cut thro',  
Close to the pliant joint, so that the rein  
Dropped from his severed hand ; the trenchant stroke  
Then falling hissed upon his charger's ears,  
Who, curbed no longer, galloped off and broke  
The compact order of the Persian spears.

## XXXV

All these, and others, whom the lapse of years  
Dooms to oblivion, fair Gildippe slew,  
When, thirsting for her spoils, the cavaliers  
Of Persia 'gainst her in a body flew ;  
At this, her husband's fears awakened were,  
Who thither spurred, his darling wife to aid,  
Whence linked together the devoted pair,  
In faithful union, double force displayed.



## XXXVI

The loyal husband, the magnanimous wife,  
Used arts of fence unheard-of and unknown :  
They only sought to save each other's life  
With loving care, forgetful of their own.  
The unblenching Amazon beat back the blows,  
That hard and heavy 'gainst her dear were sped ;  
Strokes aimed at her he failed not to oppose  
With shield, nay would, if needed, with his head.

## XXXVII

Each makes the other's vengeance and defence  
His own sole care ; audacious Artaban  
He killed with sudden savage violence—  
By him was ruled the isle of Boëcan ;  
By the same arm was laid Alvante low,  
Who rashly ventured to attack his love,  
While Arimont, who gave her lord a blow,  
His front from eye to eye Gildippe clove.

## XXXVIII

Thus fell the Persians, but more havoc made  
The King of Samarcand among the Franks ;  
Where'er he turned his horse or trenchant blade,  
Down fell like levelled corn the adverse ranks ;  
Those blest that did not the first stroke survive,  
Nor underneath his ponderous charger got ;  
Since those that from his sword escaped alive,  
His destrier bit and trampled under foot.

## XXXIX

By Altamoro's arm were thus laid low,  
Ardon the great, and Brunellon the strong,  
The head and helm of one were severed so,  
That on his back they in two pieces hung ;  
Pierced was the other in that cruel fight,  
Where heart-expanding laughter takes its rise,  
So that (most horrid and unnatural sight),  
Constrained he laughs, and wildly laughing dies.

## XL

Nor did his homicidal scimeter,  
Alone drive those from the attractive world,  
But with them into fell destruction were  
Gentonio, Guasco, Rosmond, Guido, hurled.  
Who can recount how many Altamore  
Slew, or were crushed his charger's weight beneath ?  
Who tell the names his slaughtered victims bore,  
The manner of their wounds or of their death ?

## XLI

There was not one his fury dared confront,  
Or ev'n to assail him from a distance feigned ;  
'Gainst him alone Gildippe turned her front,  
Nor from the questionable test refrained.  
On Thermodonte's banks ne'er Amazon  
Brandished the shield or two-edged falchion so  
Boldly, as she now boldly galloped on  
To meet her furious formidable foe.

## XLII

She struck where golden and enamelled glowed,  
Upon his helmet the barbaric crown,  
Which she so shivered, that the Persian bowed,  
Forced by the stroke, his haughty forehead down.  
Well judged the Pagan king, that from some strong  
And stalwart arm that vigorous onslaught came,  
Whence shamed, spiteful, he revenged the wrong ;  
Revenge was simultaneous with his shame.

## XLIII

For the same moment, with such violence  
He struck Gildippe's forehead, that she fell,  
Reft of all vigour and of every sense,  
But her dear spouse sustained her in the selle.  
Enough for him, the king struck not again ;  
Was it their fortune or his chivalry ?  
So a magnanimous lion with disdain  
A sleeper leaves, and looks and passes by.

## XLIV

Meanwhile Ormondo, to whose ruthless hands  
The inhuman office was entrusted, got  
Beneath false colours 'mong the Christian bands  
With his co-partners in the hellish plot.  
Thus skulking wolves that counterfeit the mien  
Of shepherds' dogs, concealed by darkness, sneak  
(Their doubtful tails their stealthy legs between),  
Around the folds, and there admission seek.

## XLV

Nearer they came, and now the Pagan knight  
Had almost reached the pious Godfred's side,  
Who, when he saw, forewarned, the gold and white  
Of the suspected uniforms, outcried :  
' Behold yon traitor, who in copied guise,  
Seeks for a Frank to pass himself, and lo !  
Moving against me his accomplices.'  
This said, he sprang on his perfidious foe,

## XLVI

Whom he maimed mortally ; the villain, dazed,  
Nor strikes, nor ev'n defends himself, nor flies ;  
Once daring, he, as tho' Medusa gazed,  
From terror freezes now and petrifies.  
By myriad swords they were at once attacked,  
'Gainst them alone was every quiver drained,  
Till in such bits were chief and followers hacked,  
That of their corpses scarce a trace remained.

## XLVII

When Godfred found himself bedabbled o'er  
With hostile blood, he to the combat flew,  
Where near him he beheld Prince Altamore  
Open and charge his closest columns through,  
So that they scattered were like Libyan sands  
Before the south ; towards him he swiftly sped ;  
With shouts and threats rebuked his flying bands,  
Assailed the assailant, and checked those that fled.

## XLVIII

Never did Ida, ne'er did Zanthus see  
Such combat as those two fierce champions waged.  
Meanwhile Prince Baldwin and his infantry,  
With Muleasses sharply were engaged ;  
Nor was the equestrian battle near the hill  
On the extreme left, with less excitement fraught,  
Where the commander of the Infidel,  
With the two powerful chiefs in person fought.

## XLIX

One of the Roberts with the chief that guides  
The hordes, in fierce and well-matched strife contends ;  
But the Indian prince his namesake's helm divides,  
And into shivers his chain armour rends.  
No foeman to compare with him as knight  
Throughout the field fierce Tisaphernes found ;  
O'er it he scoured, where thickest seemed the fight,  
And much and varied slaughter spread around.

## L

Thus warred the rival hosts, whose hopes and fears  
Now rose, now fell, in doubtful balance hung ;  
Shields shattered, fractured armour, splintered spears,  
Were o'er the field in wild confusion flung.  
In breasts and bellies disembowelled, here  
Sabres were stuck—there lying on the plain ;  
Here lay supine—there prone a cavalier,  
Who bit the ground in agony of pain.

## LI

The steed lay stretched his lifeless master near,  
Comrades beside their bleeding comrades bled ;  
Foe lay on foe—upon his vanquished peer  
The victor lay—the dying on the dead.  
No sound distinct—yet was no silence there,  
But a strange something that vague fears inspired ;  
The curse of rage, the gnashing of despair,  
The groans of those that languished and expired.

## LII

The arms that were so brilliant to behold,  
Squalid and sad, no more delight the eye ;  
Lost hath the steel its flash, its rays the gold,  
The colours erst so bright, their brilliancy.  
All that of gaudy and becoming smiled  
In plume and broidery, under foot was pressed,  
And what blood stained not, filthy dust defiled :  
Such changed appearance the two camps possessed.

## LIII

The Arab now, the Æthiop and the Moor,  
Who held the extreme left, deploy their ranks,  
And, pushing forward in half-circle, pour  
Down on the Christians and surround their flanks.  
The slingers, too, and archers from afar  
Keep on the Franks a galling fire, when, lo !  
Rinaldo and his squadron joined the war ;  
Less shock were earthquake, lightning's flash more slow.

## LIV

Asmir of Meroë among the adust  
Æthiops, was of their brave the most renowned ;  
Him, where the neck is knitted to the bust,  
Rinaldo caught, and stretched upon the ground.  
But when the taste of victory had warmed  
His thirst for slaughter of the Infidel,  
Actions the excited conqueror performed  
Prodigious, horrible, incredible.

## LV

More deaths than blows he gave, and yet there rung  
Of these a storm ; but as so rapidly  
A furious dragon lashes forth one tongue,  
That all bystanders think he vibrates three ;  
Ev'n so, the panic-stricken people thought  
His rapid hand three falchions whirled, and the eye  
Believed the false, by the swift motion caught,  
And terror stamped it as reality.

## LVI

The Libyan tyrants and the Negro kings  
He slew, and crimsoned with each other's blood ;  
And as on other arms his falchion rings,  
His troops the example of their chief pursued.  
With horrible contempt and frantic glee  
The unresisting Infidel they smote ;  
Not fight it was, but simple butchery :  
Here was the steel, and there the victim's throat !

## LVII

But not for long their foes the Pagans faced,  
Or wounds received in noble parts ; away  
The masses fled, by panic fear so chased  
That all were thrown in wildest disarray.  
Still the Franks followed on the Pagans' trace,  
Till at all points they were discomfited ;  
The impetuous victor then relaxed his pace ;  
Less fierce he was 'gainst those that fastest fled.

## LVIII

As the north wind, which hills and woods oppose,  
Its force redoubles and its ire unchains,  
But with a breath more soft and gentle blows,  
When unresisted, o'er the level plains.  
Or as, 'mid rocks, the billows foam and fret,  
But lose their fury in the open sea,  
So the less opposition that he met,  
Decreased Rinaldo's animosity.

## LIX

But when, ashamed his noble rage to waste  
Ignobly 'gainst the flying foeman's back,  
'Gainst the infantry, that had the Arabs placed  
To flank it, he directed his attack.  
There 'twas exposed, those absent being or dead  
Who at that juncture should have rendered aid ;  
He came athwart it, charging, at the head  
Of his bold men at arms, the foot brigade,



## IX

And burst thro' all defence, and 'mid their ranks  
Was by sheer force of the momentum borne ;  
Down, down they fell before the impetuous Franks :  
Whirlwind less quickly lays the pliant corn.  
With blood of mangled limbs, with swords and spears,  
Paved was the reeking field, and under foot  
The Turks were trampled by the cavaliers,  
Who o'er them swept, nor paused in their pursuit.

## LXI

Rinaldo reached at last the golden car  
In which Armida sat in warlike pride ;  
A noble guard of vassal barons were  
And lovers guarding her on every side.  
Him by a thousand well-known signs she knew,  
And trembled 'twixt resentment and desire ;  
Rinaldo's features changed a little, too :  
But she first ice became, and then all fire.

## LXII

Like one engaged on something else, the knight  
Avoids her car, and passes ; but the mass  
Of her sworn champions would not, without fight,  
Allow their rival cavalier to pass.  
Some couched the spear, others unsheathed the brand  
Herself an arrow fixed upon the bow ;  
Resentment hardened and impelled her hand,  
But Love appeased her and restrained the blow.

## LXIII

Love rose 'gainst ire, and showed, beyond all doubt,  
What living fire, tho' hid, her heart contained ;  
Three times her hand to shoot him she stretched out ;  
Three times withdrew it downwards, and refrained.  
Anger at last prevailed ; the bow she bent,  
And made the feathers of the quarrel fly.  
The arrow flew ; but with the arrow went  
A prayer that it might pass him idly by.

## LXIV

She would have rather that the piercing dart  
Back had returned and pierced her breast : if thus  
Such power has Love, tho' losing, o'er the heart,  
How irresistible—victorious !  
But she began her lenience to revoke,  
As in her wayward breast fresh furies rise ;  
Thus now she dreaded, now desired the stroke  
Might tell, and followed it with eager eyes.

## LXV

But not in vain directed was the stroke,  
Which struck the cavalier's cuirass, and there,  
Instead of piercing it, the quarrel broke :  
His arms too hard for blow of woman were.  
He turned away ; she, burning 'neath the slight  
Of his supposed affront, another dart  
Shot, then a thousand, nor impinged the knight :  
But while she arrowed, Cupid pierced her heart.

## LXVI

‘What—is he so invulnerable,’ she said,  
‘That hostile force he cares not for, nor feels?  
Or is it that his limbs are habited  
In the adamant that his hard bosom steels?  
On him no power has mortal hand or eye ;  
Such stern unyielding rigour he doth show,  
Armed and unarmed, defeated still am I,  
Despised alike as lover and as foe.

## LXVII

‘What new devices yet remain to try?  
What other form can I now take on me?  
Alas ! I cannot on my knights rely,  
Since thro’ my blinding tears I seem to see,  
Nay, plainly see, that, paragoned with his,  
Their arms are useless, and their efforts vain.’  
For now she saw that of her votaries  
Some were struck down, and some already slain.

## LXVIII

Alone she felt not able for defence,  
And seemed already prisoner and a slave ;  
To her no assurance (she had bow and lance)  
The arms of Cynthia or Minerva gave ;  
And as a timorous cygnet, o’er whom towers  
Fierce taloned eagle with exultant air,  
Down to the ground with folded pinion cowers ;  
Resembling such her timid movements were.

## LXIX

But Altamore, who to this moment had  
Rallied his Persian followers when thrown  
Into confusion, and who would have fled,  
But were prevented by his means alone,  
Now, seeing his idol brought to such a strait,  
Ran not, but flew there, by her charms enslaved;  
Troops, honour, all he abandoned to their fate :  
Let the world perish, so his love be saved.

## LXX

Escorting then her ill-protected car,  
A path he opened with his sword for it ;  
But at that moment his battalions were  
By Godfred and Rinaldo put to flight.  
Their desperate plight the wretched prince discerned  
And better lover than commander made ;  
When, having saved Armida, he returned,  
With, to his beaten troops, untimely aid.

## LXXI

Since upon that side from their fierce attack  
The Turks were routed irretrievably ;  
But, on the other, the Franks turned their back,  
The field abandoning to the enemy.  
Maimed in the face and in the bosom struck,  
One Robert scarce effected a retreat ;  
The other prisoner Prince Adrastus took :  
Thus equally was balanced the defeat.

## LXXII

Then Godfred seized the opportunity,  
Re-formed his line, and, without waiting, dashed  
Back to the fight in that emergency ;  
Thus the two wings entire together clashed.  
Each was adorned with glorious spoils, each dyed  
With the bright crimson of his foeman's blood ;  
Victory and honour shone on either side,  
'Twixt whom, still doubtful, Mars and Fortune stood.

## LXXIII

While in such manner raged the bloody fight  
Between the Christian and the Pagan host,  
Up to a terrace on the turret's height  
The soldan went, and from that distant post  
Beheld, as on a stage or lists beneath,  
The tragic drama of the human state,  
The assault, the foul unsightliness of death,  
And the great game of accident and fate.

## LXXIV

Somewhat surprised and stupefied he stood,  
When that dread sight first shocked upon his eyes ;  
But, as he gazed upon that field of blood,  
He burned to share the perils of the emprise ;  
Nor curbed his impulse, but without delay  
Braced on his helmet, else armed cap-à-pie,  
'Up, up !' he cried ; ' no shrinking—for to-day  
Our doom is sealed—or death or victory.'

## LXXV

Or that, perhaps, 'twas Providence divine,  
That did him with such furious spirit fire,  
That, to its very ashes, Palestine  
Might on that day, that fatal day, expire ;  
Or that an impulse to confront his fate  
Constrained him, since he felt it was not far ;  
Downwards he rushed, unlocked the steel-barred gate,  
And bore impetuous, unexpected war ;

## LXXVI

Nor waited till his comrades had complied  
With his fierce call, but sallied forth alone ;  
Alone, a thousand foemen he defied,  
Alone, through thousands he pushed boldly on ;  
But, as if by his spirit rapt, the rest,  
Ev'n Aladino, caught his martial air ;  
The vile, the timid, no more fears exprest ;  
'Twas less the work of hope than of despair.

## LXXVII

Beneath his dreadful rapid strokes fell thick  
Those the fierce Turk first met ; he was so skilled  
In dealing death around him, and so quick,  
That him you saw not killing, but them killed.  
From tongue to tongue, from front to rear, there ran  
A sudden panic as the tidings spread,  
So that the Syrian Christians, to a man,  
Thrown into dire disorder, almost fled.

## LXXVIII

But with less terror and less disarray,  
Their ground the Gascons held, and order kept,  
Altho', as nearest to the danger, they  
The foremost were o'er whom the tempest swept.  
No fang, no claw of beast or bird of prey  
Was e'er so crimsoned with the blood outpoured  
From lamb or dove, as in that bloody fray  
Among the Franks was Solymano's sword.

## LXXIX

Athirst and hungry, it appeared almost  
To feed upon their limbs and drink their blood.  
With him the king, with him the vassal host,  
Their sabres in the assailant's gore imbrued ;  
But Raymond rushed where Solymano broke  
His squadron's ranks ; disdaining he to fly,  
Tho' well he recognised that arm whose stroke  
Had caused him erst such mortal agony.

## LXXX

Again his foe he fronted, again fell,  
Re-stricken where he stricken was before ;  
'Twas age excessive now began to tell,  
For which excessive were the blows he bore.  
For him at once a hundred falchions gleamed,  
Him hundred shields defended ; but away  
The fiery soldan strode, or that he deemed  
Him dead outright, or a too easy prey,

## LXXXI

And hewed and hacked and massacred the rest,  
And in small compass mighty wonders wrought ;  
And as fresh fury urged his savage breast,  
Material elsewhere for fresh carnage sought.  
As, pinched with hunger, one leaves frugal fare  
For a rich banquet of abundant food,  
So rushed he to more ample battle, where  
To sate his maddened appetite for blood.

## LXXXII

And down descended thro' the shattered wall  
To the great battle with intolerant haste,  
His troops their rage retain, his foemen all  
The fears that had them from his fury chased.  
The Turks would fain the imperfect victory close,  
And, by success emboldened, madly fight ;  
The Franks resist ; but their resistance shows  
Less symptoms of resistance than of flight.

## LXXXIII

Still showing front, the Gascon troops give way,  
But, scattered o'er the field, the Syrians fled,  
Not far from where the gallant Tancred lay,  
Who heard their cries within, and from his bed  
His maimed and still enfeebled body raised,  
Mounted the roof, and saw in full retreat  
Some of the Franks, and, as around he gazed,  
The count struck down, and some in route complete.



## LXXXIV

But valour, which the valorous never fails  
Nor droops, altho' the exhausted body should,  
The wounded warrior's languid members mails,  
As if in place of spirit and of blood.  
His ponderous shield, as 'twere a burden light,  
He on his weak and bloodless left arm bore ;  
Snatched up a naked sabre in his right  
( 'Tis all the brave require ), nor waited more,

## LXXXV

But rushed down, shouting : ' Whither do ye fly,  
Your leader leaving to yon hordes a prey ?  
What ! let the temples of the enemy  
The trophied armour of your lord display ?  
Gascons, go back to Gascony, and tell  
The son, you fled from where his father died.'  
His unarmed breast, while making this appeal,  
Defence to armed, all-powerful hosts supplied.

## LXXXVI

And 'neath his heavy buckler, which was made  
Of seven well-seasoned and unyielding hides,  
Upon whose back there was a covering laid  
Of the most finely-tempered steel besides,  
From sword, from shaft, from every weapon kept  
Raimondo covered, while his trenchant blade  
The space around him so completely swept  
That the count lay secure, as if in shade ;

## LXXXVII

Who, sheltered 'neath such faithful shelter, came  
To himself, and, breathing, rose refreshed once more,  
Feeling within a double fire inflame  
His cheeks with shame, with rage his inmost core ;  
And on all sides his flashing eyeballs turned  
In quest of him that struck with such despite ;  
And seeing him not, with bitter vengeance burned  
The outrage on his followers to requite.

## LXXXVIII

Back then returned the Gascon cavaliers,  
And, bent on vengeance, with their chief unite ;  
The Pagan's courage is now changed to fears,  
And boldness enters where before was fright.  
The attackers yield ; who yielded, now attack.  
Thus in a moment all things changed became :  
Such Raymond's vengeance, whose bold arm paid back,  
By death of hundreds, his one single shame.

## LXXXIX

While Raymond thus his wounded pride to sate  
Upon the most illustrious Pagans tried,  
He saw the usurper of the noble state  
Fight in the van, and galloped to his side,  
And struck him, and restruck him 'twixt the eyes  
On the same spot, nor from his strokes refrained ;  
Whence fell the king, who, venting horrid sighs,  
Expiring, bit the ground o'er which he reigned.

## XC

One chief being absent and the other slain,  
Diverse emotions the survivors feel ;  
Some, like infuriate animals, amain  
Rush in despair upon the hostile steel ;  
Others, affrighted, deem it best to flee  
Where erst they met with a secure retreat ;  
But, mingling with the flying enemy,  
The victors enter and their work complete.

## XCI

The keep is won. Upon the sill and stairs  
The fugitive Pagans fall with heavy loss ;  
And Raymond, mounting to its summit, bears  
Aloft the glorious ensign of the Cross,  
And in the presence of both camps unrolled  
The haughty symbol of their victory.  
It fiery Solyman did not behold,  
Since absent at the greater fight was he.

## XCII

He reached the field, which reeking was and red,  
And every moment, from fresh slaughter, streamed,  
So that now like the city of the Dead,  
Where Death his trophies shows and stalks, it seemed.  
There he a destrier saw, with dangling rein,  
Fly, riderless, in terror from the ranks,  
~~Whom~~, caught, he mounted, and across the plain,  
To reach the battle, pressed its heaving flanks.

*which*

## XCIII

Great, but brief succour, Solymano brought  
To the disheartened Saracens—you'd say,  
Lightning he was that, with destruction fraught,  
Flashed unexpectedly, and passed away ;  
But marks eternal, in many a blasted stone,  
Leaves of its transient momentary flight.  
Hundreds he slew ; but of one pair alone  
Will I, to snatch from Time their memory, write.

## XCIV

Edward and fair Gildippe : your hard fate  
And honourable actions I would link  
With and mid noblest spirits consecrate,  
If such be granted to my Tuscan ink ;  
So that your names as miracles appear  
Of Love and Virtue stamped upon all time,  
And lovers honour with a pitying tear  
Your noble deaths and my unworthy rhyme.

## XCV

The heroic woman turned her steed to oppose  
The Turk, who spread such havoc o'er the field,  
And caught him full with two great slashing blows ;  
One struck his flank, one clave in twain his shield.  
He, who the heroine by her armour knew,  
• Behold the strumpet and her minion ! ' cried ;  
• Better defence the needle were for you,  
Than lover's arm or broadsword by your side.'

## XCVI

He ceased, and, with more rage than e'er possessed,  
A fierce and desperate blow against her drove,  
Which, her arms riving, dared impinge her breast—  
But worthy only of the shafts of love.  
She, dropping suddenly the bridle rein,  
Appeared to droop—to perish ; her sad fate  
Her Edward saw, and spurring on amain,  
Not tardy was, but most unfortunate.

## XCVII

What in that dire dilemma should he do ?  
As rage and pity urge him different ways ;  
That, to revenge himself on him who slew,  
This, his dear falling treasure to upraise ;  
But Love, impartial, showed him how he might  
Neither compassion nor revenge neglect :  
To vent his anger he employed his right,  
And his left arm Gildippe to protect.

## XCVIII

But power and will divided thus in twain,  
Powerless against the stalwart Pagan proved,  
Since her he could not in the selle sustain,  
Nor slay the homicide of his beloved ;  
Nay, it so happened that the soldan lopped  
His left arm off, which had Gildippe stayed,  
Disabled whence his precious charge he dropped,  
And on her own, his limbs at full length laid.

## XCIX

Like elm, to whom the married vine's frail form  
Clings for support, and twines enamoured round,  
If felled by axe or rooted up by storm,  
Drags with himself his consort to the ground,  
Stripping the leaves, and crushing 'neath his weight  
The grapes and green apparel of his bride ;  
He seems to grieve far more than for his fate,  
For her who falls un murmuring at his side.

## C

Thus Edward fell, for her alone he grieved,  
Whom heaven had made his partner unto death ;  
They tried to speak, but could not, they but heaved  
Sighs indistinct, as failed their waning breath ;  
Each gazed on each, each pressed the other, loth  
To part, while ebbing life within them lay,  
When in a moment darkness shrouded both,  
And their pure souls together passed away.

## CI

Fame then unloosed her tongues, and spread for flight  
Her airy pinions, and their fate affirmed ;  
Nor from Fame only heard Rinaldo it,  
Its truth a special messenger confirmed :  
Within him grief, benevolence, and wrath,  
Combined with duty, for deep vengeance cried,  
When the fierce king, Adrastus, crossed his path,  
And in the soldan's presence him defied ;

## CII

Shouting aloud : ' By well-known signs thou art he  
Whom I pursue, and burn to meet again ;  
Shield there is not but I have scanned, and thee  
Have called by name the livelong day in vain ;  
Now, to my goddess will I pay my vow  
Of vengeance with thy head. Turn, then, and try  
By proof our valour, nay, our fury, thou  
Armida's foeman, her defender I.'

## CIII

Thus challenged him and dealt a desperate stroke,  
First on his temples, then his neck, nor clave  
His helmet, that no mortal arm had broke,  
But to his saddle-bow Rinaldo drave ;  
Who in the side Adrastus wounded so,  
That vain the aid Apollo's art could bring,  
Whence fell (the honour due to one sole blow)  
The monstrous mortal, the unconquered king.

## CIV

Horror and mute amazement, blent with awe,  
The hearts and blood of the bystanders froze ;  
And Solymano, when that stroke he saw,  
Perturbed became at heart—his colour goes,  
And clearly seeing his impending doom,  
Could not determine what 'twere best to do ;  
For him unusual circumstance, but whom  
On earth do not Heaven's laws eterne subdue.

## CV

As in their fitful slumbers the insane,  
Or sick, at times strange troublous visions see,  
Now they desire to run, and stretch, and strain  
Their limbs, with desperate but vain energy,  
Since to the greatest efforts which they make,  
Responds not palsied hand or nerveless foot ;  
Now they would loose the tongue and try to speak,  
But no words follow, and the voice is mute.

## CVI

So would the soldan force himself to engage  
The Christian prince, and strove and struggled too,  
But knew not in himself his wonted rage,  
For ev'n himself in his spent forces knew ;  
What sparks of courage rose within him, were  
Quenched by a sense of supernatural fright ;  
Still, though perplexed his bosom was, he ne'er  
Thought of submission, and still less of flight.

## CVII

The victor reached the irresolute Turk at last,  
And on up-coming (so it seemed to him)  
Likeness to aught of mortal mould surpassed,  
In fury, speed, and magnitude of limb ;  
Little resisted he, nor, as he died,  
Uttered one groan, or ever blenched the brand ;  
With every generous usage he complied,  
Nor act performed that was not great and grand.



## CVIII

But when the soldan, who in battles past  
Oft fell, and, like Antæus, rose anew  
More fierce than ever, pressed the ground at last  
To rise no more, around the rumour flew :  
And Fortune, light and fickle tho' she be,  
No longer durst the victory leave in doubt,  
But stayed her wheel, and 'neath their leaders she  
Joined the Frank forces, and on their side fought.

## CIX

The imperial guard now joined the rest in flight ;  
Formed of the pith and marrow of the East,  
Once styled immortal 'twas, but now, in spite  
Of that haught title, to exist it ceased.  
The captain seeing its standard-bearer fly,  
Stopped and addressed him in this galling strain :  
' Art thou not he whom, among thousands, I  
Selected my lord's standard to sustain ?

## CX

' That proud device I trusted not to thee  
To bear it backward, recreant Rimedon !  
What ! would'st thou, coward, thy commander see  
Beset by foes, and leave him all alone ;  
What wouldest ? Safety ? Then return with me,  
Since where thou goest leads to certain death :  
Let those here combat who preserved would be ;  
The path of honour is the safest path.'

## CXI

Back he returned with burning shame suffused.  
Then the chief menaced, struck, and even more  
Harsh reprimand against the others used,  
Nay, made them face the steel they shunned before;  
Thus of his broken wing, the better part  
Once more he rallied, and some hope still found;  
But Tisaphernes gave him greatest heart,  
Who yet had ceded not one inch of ground.

## CXII

Marvels wrought Tisaphernes on that day ;  
There, were the Normans routed by him—here,  
Thrown the bold Flemings into disarray,  
And slain Ruggiero, Gerard, and Garnier ;  
But when he had towards deathless honour's goal  
Lengthened by glorious deeds his short-spanned life,  
Careless to live, he, with undaunted soul,  
Sought the most deadly peril of the strife.

## CXIII

He saw Rinaldo, and tho' crimson red  
Had grown his colours of cerulean blue,  
And tho' his silver eagles' claws and head  
Ensanguined were, the cognisance he knew.  
' Behold the greatest, deadliest risk,' cried he ;  
' Ah, Heaven, I pray thee, aid my valour now,  
So that Armida his destruction see ;  
Victor, his arms to Mahomet I vow.'

## CXIV

Thus prayed, but were his prayers of no avail,  
Unheard by his deaf idol, Mahomet.  
Then, as a lion lashes with his tail  
His sides, his innate savageness to whet,  
So he his anger roused, which, sharpened then  
Upon love's whetstone, into fury flashed.  
He gathered all his vigour, and amain,  
Crouched 'neath his shield, against Rinaldo dashed.

## CXV

When, seeing assailant with uplifted blade,  
Against him galloped the Italian knight.  
At once a space was in the middle made,  
And there all rushed to view the appalling sight.  
Such and so different were the Italian's blows  
And those the Saracenic hero smote,  
That, lost in wonder, all, both friends and foes,  
Their own resentments and mishaps forgot.

## CXVI

One only struck, one struck and wounded, who  
More solid arms and greater strength possessed.  
With blood the Persian did the field imbrue ;  
Gone was his shield, and rent in twain his crest.  
The increasing weakness of her champion knight,  
His riven mail, the lovely witch beheld,  
And saw the others stricken with such fright,  
That knot but feeble them together held.

## CXVII

Erst guarded by so many cavaliers,  
Now on her car forlorn, deserted, she  
Existence hates, the yoke of bondage fears,  
Despairs of vengeance and of victory,  
And springing down, 'twixt frenzy and affright,  
Vaults on her palfrey, and with rapid stride  
Gallops away ; while hang upon her flight  
Anger and love, two sleuth-hounds, at her side.

## CXVIII

Thus Cleopatra, in the days of yore,  
Fled all alone from the ensanguined fight.  
Leaving to face the fortunate emperor,  
Imperilled by the sea, her faithful knight,  
Who, rendered faithless to himself by love,  
After the solitary sails soon sped.  
To follow her thus, Tisaphernes strove,  
But this the Italian paladin forbade.

## CXIX

Soon as the Pagan's idol disappeared,  
It seemed the sun had set and daylight fled :  
And 'gainst him who so unjustly interfered,  
He desperate turned and struck upon the head.  
To forge Jove's writhen thunderbolts, less light  
Bronte's huge hammer falls, than on his crest  
Down fell the falchion of the Persian knight,  
Whose stroke his forehead doubled to his breast.

## CXX

But soon erect, and upright as before,  
Rinaldo whirled his sword, and with it clave  
His solid hauberk ; right to the heart's core,  
Where life resides, the vengeful point he drave,  
And so far past it, that a double wound  
From breast to back the Saracen displayed,  
Whose flying soul for its departure found  
More than one broad and ample passage made.

## CXXI

Then paused Rinaldo to examine where  
He could assault or succour give, but found  
The Pagans broke and flying in despair,  
And all their standards prostrate on the ground ;  
Whence chilled his heat of martial fury grew,  
And he desisted further blood to shed ;  
And calm becoming, her remembered, who  
Had from the field forlorn, forsaken fled.

## CXXII

Compassion urged him (for he saw her flight)  
To show her every courtesy and care,  
Remembering he had sworn to be her knight  
At his departure ; whence he galloped where  
Upon the grass her palfrey's hoofs betrayed  
The course she had taken in her lonely ride.  
Meanwhile she reached a spot whose gloomy shade  
Bespoke its aptitude for suicide.

## CXXIII

Well pleased she was that to a spot so drear,  
Blind fortune had her wandering footsteps led ;  
Here she dismounted from her destrier, here  
Her bow and other arms deposited.  
' Unfortunate arms that crimson should,' said she,  
' To issue forth uncrimsoned from the fight ;  
I lay you down, here henceforth buried be,  
Since my deep wrongs unable to requite.

## CXXIV

' Yet no, amid so many, it can't be  
But one at least be bathed in blood to-day ;  
If other breasts seem adamant, ye  
Venture to pierce a woman's bosom may ;  
In this, mine own, which naked I expose,  
Display your merits, and your victories gain ;  
Tender it is—how tender Cupid knows,  
Who 'gainst it ne'er discharged one shaft in vain.

## CXXV

' Your former cowardice I will forgive,  
If against me ye prove but sharp and true ;  
But in what state does poor Armida live,  
If her sole hope of safety lies in you ?  
Since unavailing other medicines prove,  
Save only wound on wound and smart on smart,  
Let wound of arrow cure the wound of Love,  
And Death relieve the anguish of my heart.

## CXXVI

‘Blest if, in death, I carry not away  
This plague to infect the regions of the dead ;  
Love, then, remain ; alone, Wrath, with me stay,  
Eternal partner of my sorrowing shade,  
Or back return with it from lightless hell .  
To him who made such mockery of me,  
And in such guise that visions horrible  
Companions of his restless slumbers be.’

## CXXVII

Here ceased ; and, ’stablished in her purpose, she  
The strongest and most piercing arrow chose,  
When, lo ! arrived the cavalier to see  
How near her life approached a desperate close.  
Desperate she looked, and as her face he scanned,  
Saw there death’s ghastly pallor was expressed ;  
Whence, stealing up behind, he seized her hand,  
Which held the barb directed to her breast.

## CXXVIII

Armida turned, and saw, to her surprise,  
Him of whose coming she was not acquainted ;  
Loudly she screamed, and turned away her eyes  
Disdainful from the well-loved face, and fainted.  
Bending her pliant, delicate neck, she sank  
Like a fair lily rudely snapt in two ;  
He made his arm a column for her flank,  
And hastened her tight bodice to undo,

## CXXIX

And did with tears of tender ruth bedew  
The face and bosom of the unhappy fair ;  
Then, as from rath and silver fall of dew  
The faded rose resumes its blooming air,  
So she, reviving, lifted towards the skies  
Her features, bathed with tear-drops not her own ;  
Thrice she raised up, and thrice cast down her eyes  
From that dear face, she dared not look upon ;

## CXXX

And with her fair frail hand disdainfully  
The stalwart arm that bore her up repelled ;  
Oft, oft she tried, nor could escape, since he,  
The more she struggled, the more tightly held.  
At length caught firmly in that dear embrace—  
For tho' she feigned, perchance, it still was dear ;  
Without one look directing to his face,  
Weeping, she thus addressed the cavalier :

## CXXXI

'Alike at parting or returning, how  
Cruel thou art, and of all pity void ;  
'Tis strange my death thou shouldst prohibit—thou  
That hast the enchantment of my life destroyed.  
Seek'st thou to save me ? For what fresh disgrace,  
For what new punishment reserved am I ?  
The traitor's secret artifice I trace ;  
But naught, indeed, they can, that cannot die.



## CXXXII

‘Thy honour, doubtless, would be incomplete  
Couldst thou not show the world a captive maid,  
Laden with chains, at thy triumphant feet,  
By force now captured, as before betrayed.  
How glorious this ! Time was I craved, ah, me !  
Both peace and life, but now with what delight  
I would welcome death ; yet ask it not of thee,  
Since aught thy gift were hateful in my sight.

## CXXXIII

‘No ; thro’ myself to free myself, I hope,  
By some means, cruel ! from thy cruelty ;  
If dagger, poison, precipice, or rope  
Thy victim fail, still, still sure ways I see ;  
And, Heaven be praised, ev’n thou canst not restrain  
The power in me that have the will to die.  
Cease, cease thy flatteries ; see ! he still would feign,  
Still foster idle hopes, deceive and lie.’

## CXXXIV

Thus mournèd she, and with the mournful stream,  
That love and rage expressed from her fair eyes,  
Affectionate tears he mingled, in which gleam  
Compassion chaste and tenderest sympathies ;  
And answered, speaking in the gentlest strain :  
‘Armida, calm thyself ; thy life I save,  
Not for disgrace or insult, but to reign ;  
Not foeman—but thy champion and thy slave.

## CXXXV

‘If thou dost faith from these my words withhold,  
Look in mine eyes and read Truth’s language there ;  
Upon the throne where reigned thy sires of old  
Thee to replace most solemnly I swear ;  
And, ah ! may Heaven some rays of light send down,  
Thee from the mist of Paganism to free,  
As I will cause that in the Orient none  
In princely state or splendour equal thee.’

## CXXXVI

Thus speaks, and prays, and bathes, and heats his prayers,  
Now with rare tears, and now with melting sighs ;  
Whence as a snow-drift before tepid airs,  
Or from the fervour of midsummer skies,  
Her wrath which seemed so fast, dissolved away,  
And other passions in its place arose.  
‘Behold thy slave, thy fiat I obey :  
Ev’n as thou wilt,’ she said, ‘of me dispose.’

## CXXXVII

Meanwhile the Egyptian captain, who beheld  
His sovereign’s standard prostrate on the ground,  
At the same time that Rimedon was felled  
By peerless Godfred’s arm, and saw around  
All his vast host discomfited or slain,  
Craven would not in the last act appear ;  
And went in search of (nor sought long in vain),  
Illustrious death from famous cavalier.

## CXXXVIII

Forward he 'gainst the elder Bouillon rode,  
For he was worthiest foe beyond compare,  
And, both in passing and arriving, showed  
Such reckless courage, that it seemed despair ;  
And at some distance shouted out : ' To die  
I come, and seek it at thy hands ; alone  
In my last desperate efforts I will try  
That my destruction shall involve thine own.'

## CXXXIX

This said, they each against the other dashed  
At the same moment with uplifted lance ;  
Cleft was the solid shield, disarmed and gashed  
The left arm of the paladin of France ;  
Who, in return, the venturous Infidel  
On his left cheek by such a blow reversed,  
That he fell backwards, stunned upon his selle,  
And, trying to rise, was through the belly pierced.

## CXL

Prince Emireno dead, there now remained,  
But few survivors of the bloody fray ;  
Godfred pursued the vanquished, but refrained,  
Seeing at his feet Prince Altamoro lay,  
With broken helm and sword, while round him were  
Masses of fierce vindictive soldiery.  
Loudly he shouted to his troops : ' Forbear !'  
And, ' Baron, yield thee ; I am Godfred.' He

## CXLI

Who to no act of degradation e'er  
Had bowed his lofty and magnanimous soul,  
Hearing that name, which rang with sound so clear  
Throughout the world, from Libya to the pole,  
Replied : ' Sir knight, I yield to thy demand,  
For thou art worthy, but thy victory '  
(Here placed his sword in gallant Godfred's hand)  
' Not poor in glory or in gold shall be.

## CXLII

' For me the riches of my realm, for me  
My consort's gems a ransom shall provide.'  
' Heaven gave me not such nature as to be  
Greedy of gold,' the Christian prince replied ;  
' Keep, keep whate'er thy Persian lands contain,  
And India's teeming coasts ; I seek not for  
The lives of others ransom to obtain ;  
I traffic not in Asia—I make war.'

## CXLIII

He ceased, the Pagan to his guards consigned,  
And the course followed of the fugitives,  
Who to the ramparts fled, nor there could find  
The least protection for their fated lives ;  
The intrenchments taken were soon filled with gore  
Which in red rivers ran from tent to tent,  
Staining their trophies, and bespattering o'er  
Each barbarous trapping and rich ornament.

## CXLIV

Thus Godfred triumphed, and as still for him  
The setting sun sufficient daylight shed,  
Without a pause, to freed Jerusalem,  
Christ's blest abode, the conquerors he led ;  
Nor yet laid down his blood-stained mantle, he  
Sped to the Temple, where, with beaming brow,  
He hung his arms up, and on bended knee  
The great tomb worshipped, and performed his vow.





NOTES  
TO  
THE SECOND VOLUME.

NOTE 1.

CANTO XI—STANZA XXXIV.

The fosse here spoken of is cut in the living rock. It runs parallel with and immediately under the north wall as far as the north-east angle. It is mentioned by Josephus as having existed in his days; consequently, however the city may have extended in other directions, it certainly formed at that time, as it does now, the boundary of Jerusalem on the north.

NOTE 2.

CANTO XII—STANZA XLVIII.

The Golden Gate stands in the eastern wall, not far from that of St. Stephen; but, as communicating with the precincts of the temple, is now kept closed. Both from inside the Haram and from outside the walls it is a beautiful object, and to the lover of the Jerusalem certainly one of the most interesting spots in the place. It directly fronts the Mount of Olives, being separated from it by the valley of Jehoshaphat. Proceeding from it in a southerly direction, we come to the Fountain of the Virgin, the scene of the combat between Clorinda and Tancredi, it being the source whence he procured water to baptize her.

LONDON

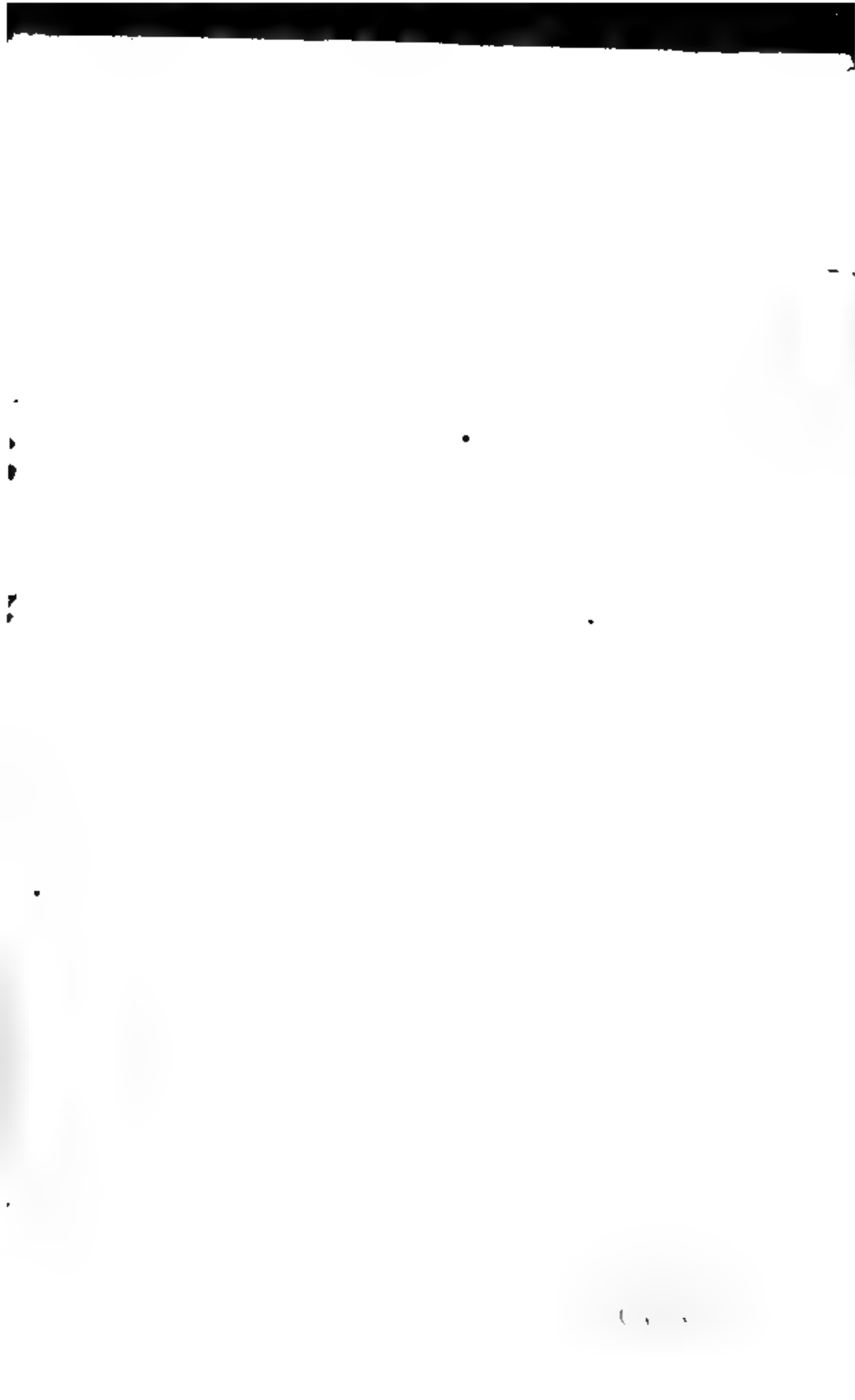
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## XXXIII

The warrior woman having snapt her spear,  
With virile arm her trusty sabre drew,  
And 'gainst the Persians urged her destrier,  
And charged and broke their densest columns thro';  
Zopirus, where man girds himself, she smote,  
(Almost asunder by her sword-cut hewed),  
Then clave, Alarco striking in the throat,  
The double passage of the voice and food.

## XXXIV

A thrust Argeo, and a downright blow,  
Prince Artaxerxes felled, one stunned, one slain ;  
She next, the left wrist of Ismael cut thro',  
Close to the pliant joint, so that the rein  
Dropped from his severed hand ; the trenchant stroke  
Then falling hissed upon his charger's ears,  
Who, curbed no longer, galloped off and broke  
The compact order of the Persian spears.

## XXXV

All these, and others, whom the lapse of years  
Dooms to oblivion, fair Gildippe slew,  
When, thirsting for her spoils, the cavaliers  
Of Persia 'gainst her in a body flew ;  
At this, her husband's fears awakened were,  
Who thither spurred, his darling wife to aid,  
Whence linked together the devoted pair,  
In faithful union, double force displayed.



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